



ROYAL COMMISSION ON NATIONAL MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

FINAL REPORT, PART I.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DATED 20TH SEPTEMBER, 1929

*Presented by the Secretary of State for
the Home Department to Parliament
by Command of His Majesty
September, 1929*

LONDON:

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The Interim Report of the Royal Commission with Oral Evidence, Memoranda and Appendices was published in Sept. 1928, in two volumes as follows:—

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THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

GEORGE R.I.

GEORGE THE FIFTH, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, to

Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Cousin and Counsellor Edgar Vincent, Viscount D'Abernon, Knight Grand Cross of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of Our Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George;

Our Trusty and Well-beloved :—

Evan Edward Charteris, Esquire (commonly called The Honourable Evan Edward Charteris) one of Our Counsel learned in the Law;

Sir Thomas Little Heath, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order;

Sir Lionel Earle, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Companion of Our Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George;

Sir Richard Tetley Glazebrook, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Doctor of Laws;

Sir George Macdonald, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Doctor of Laws, Doctor of Literature;

Sir Courtauld Thomson, Knight Commander of Our Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Companion of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath;

Sir William Martin Conway, Knight, Master of Arts, Doctor of Literature;

Sir Henry Alexander Miers, Knight, Doctor of Science;

Sir Robert Clermont Witt, Knight, Commander of Our Most Excellent Order of the British Empire; and

Arthur Ernest Cowley, Esquire, Doctor of Literature,

Greeting !

Whereas We have deemed it expedient that a Commission should forthwith issue

(1) to enquire into and report on the legal position, organisation, administration, accommodation, the structural condition of



the buildings, and general cost of the institutions containing the National collections situate in London and Edinburgh, viz.: The British Museum and the Natural History Museum, the National Gallery and the National Gallery of British Art (Tate Gallery), the National Portrait Gallery, the Public Record Office, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Bethnal Green Museum, the Science Museum, the Geological Museum, the Wallace Collection, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the London Museum, the Imperial War Museum, the Royal Scottish Museum, the National Galleries, Scotland, the Scottish Museum of Antiquities, the National Library, Scotland, and the Record Department of the Registry House, Edinburgh:

(2) To investigate the existing conditions of the various collections and their growth in former years and to report in the case of each Institution what is likely to be the growth of its collections and what the consequential increase in expenditure in the next 50 years if the present practice regulating acquisitions remain unaltered:

(3) To consider in what way, if any, expenditure may be limited without crippling the educational and general usefulness of the Institutions, and in particular, having regard to the financial condition of the country, whether it would be desirable to institute a more general system of admission fees:

(4) To enquire to what extent there is congestion in Museums and Galleries and to report whether, if there be such congestion, it can be relieved in any other way than by extensive building; and in particular whether improvement could be brought about by a redistribution of specimens between different State-supported Institutions or by disposal of specimens which may be either of slight importance or in excess of requirements, by way of sale or of gift or loan to provincial Museums and Galleries and to other authorities; and in this connection to ascertain the practice followed in the case of the chief National Collections abroad:

(5) To consider whether it is desirable to effect any change in the existing practice of the British Museum with regard to its reception and preservation of publications under the provisions of the Copyright Acts:

(6) To consider whether the existing administrative responsibility for the various Institutions is the most appropriate under modern conditions and whether it conduces to the most advantageous distribution and display of the National Treasures and to report whether it would be desirable while preserving certain defined powers to their Trustees or Directors, to place them all under some central authority or under different authorities than those at present controlling them:

(7) To report whether the most suitable and scientific arrangement of specimens and their allocation to the most appropriate Museum or Gallery are in any way hampered by the terms of benefactors' bequests, and if so whether it would be

expedient to take steps with a view to a modification of the terms of such bequests :

(8) To make recommendations generally which may suggest themselves as pertinent in the light of the information obtained during the course of the Inquiry :

Now know ye that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability, have authorised and appointed, and do by these Presents authorise and appoint you the said Edgar Vincent, Viscount D'Abernon (Chairman); Evan Edward Charteris, Sir Thomas Little Heath, Sir Lionel Earle, Sir Richard Tetley Glazebrook, Sir George Macdonald, Sir Courtauld Thomson, Sir William Martin Conway, Sir Henry Alexander Miers, Sir Robert Clermont Witt and Arthur Ernest Cowley to be Our Commissioners for the purposes of the said Inquiry :

And for the better effecting the purposes of this Our Commission, we do by these Presents give and grant unto you, or any three or more of you, full power to call before you such persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this Our Commission; to call for information in writing; and also to call for, have access to and examine all such books, documents, registers and records as may afford you the fullest information on the subject, and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever :

And We do by these Presents authorise and empower you, or any two or more of you, to visit and inspect personally such places as you may deem it expedient so to inspect for the more effectual carrying out of the purposes aforesaid :

Provided that should you deem it expedient in the execution of this Our Commission to visit places outside Great Britain then the powers and privileges hereby conferred on any three or more of you shall belong to and be exercised by, any two or more of you :

And We do by these Presents will and ordain that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you Our said Commissioners, or any three or more of you, may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof, and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment :

And We do further ordain that you, or any three or more of you, have liberty to report your proceedings under this Our Commission from time to time if you shall judge it expedient so to do :

And Our further will and pleasure is that you do, with as little delay as possible, report to Us under your hands and seals,

or under the hands or seals of any three or more of you, your opinion upon the matters herein submitted for your consideration.

Given at Our Court at *Saint James's*, the First day of *July*, One thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven; In the Eighteenth Year of Our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command.

W. Joynson-Hicks.

Mr. John Beresford, of the Treasury, was seconded to be the Secretary to the Royal Commission, and Mr. J. R. Chambers to be Assistant Secretary. As from the 14th November, 1928, Mr. J. H. Penson succeeded Mr. Chambers as Assistant Secretary.

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ROYAL COMMISSION ON NATIONAL MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES.

FINAL REPORT, PART I.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY.

1. In the Interim Report which we submitted to Your Majesty on the 1st September, 1928, we dealt with certain urgent practical needs of the National Museums and Galleries. The endorsement of our recommendations in their entirety by Your Majesty's Government has been a powerful stimulus in the further prosecution of the task entrusted to us. In this connexion especial reference should be made to the public spirit of Sir Joseph Duveen, who has facilitated the execution of the programme advocated in the Interim Report. It is not the extent of his donation which we desire to emphasise, but the fact that he has appreciated a real defect in existing arrangements and has applied his munificence to the task of improving the display of the national treasures. His example, if followed by other donors, will place this country at the head of the nations of the world in artistic and instructive exhibition.

Since the publication of our Interim Report we have held 15 meetings and have received much valuable evidence. Three Sub-Committees have examined problems connected with the chief National Libraries, with Congestion and Improved Exhibition, and with Publicity and Closer Contact with the Public.⁽¹⁾ A fourth Sub-Committee has enquired into certain technical questions connected with structural security at the British Museum.⁽²⁾ Nor have we limited our enquiry to this country. Individual members of the Commission have re-visited many notable National Institutions on the continent of Europe and in the United States of America. Furthermore, we have obtained valuable information as to the principal Museums and Galleries in the great Dominions and Colonies overseas, and in the Empire

¹ These Sub-Committees were constituted as follows:—*Libraries Sub-Committee*: The Hon. Evan Charteris, K.C. (Chairman), Dr. A. E. Cowley, F.B.A., Sir Thomas Heath, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.S., Sir Richard Glazebrook, K.C.B., F.R.S., Sir George Macdonald, K.C.B., F.B.A. *Exhibition Sub-Committee*: Sir Henry Miers, F.R.S. (Chairman), Sir Lionel Earle, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., Sir Robert Witt, C.B.E. *Publicity, etc., Sub-Committee*: Sir Martin Conway, M.P., Litt.D. (Chairman), Sir George Macdonald, K.C.B., F.B.A., Sir Henry Miers, F.R.S., Sir Courtauld Thomson, K.B.E., C.B., Sir Robert Witt, C.B.E.

² This Sub-Committee was constituted as follows:—Sir Richard Glazebrook, K.C.B., F.R.S. (Chairman), The Hon. Evan Charteris, K.C., Sir Lionel Earle, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., Sir Henry Miers, F.R.S., Sir Robert Witt, C.B.E.

of India. We have also secured the views of leading experts in foreign countries, who have generously, and with an ability equalled only by their frankness, expressed their views on the broad questions of Museum and Gallery management.⁽¹⁾ We desire to record our sense of obligation to them. Finally, we have published the full evidence received so that an ample store of suggestive material will be available for consideration by those who are concerned for the well-being of the National Museums and Galleries.

2. Our Terms of Reference, in effect, invite us to enquire into the whole status of the twenty National Institutions named therein, and to make recommendations generally which may suggest themselves as pertinent in the light of the information obtained during the course of our enquiry. We have felt that a too literal interpretation of our Terms of Reference might involve us in protracted deliberations, and in the production of a series of lengthy reports in the course of which the real issues would be obscured in a cloud of detail. We have therefore concentrated attention on the main aspects as they presented themselves to us in the course of an extensive investigation. Our conclusions we shall endeavour to set out as compendiously as possible. Part II of our Report relating to the individual Institutions will be presented separately at an early date.

PART I.—GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Character of the National Institutions.

3. In our Interim Report we gave some account of the foundation and evolution of each of the Institutions. We drew attention to the many-sided resources and services at the disposal of the nation, and we indicated how much of this rich development was due to the energy and munificence of private persons. In general it is true to say that the State has not initiated. The Collections, whether artistic, literary or scientific, once formed by the zeal of individuals, and thereafter bestowed on or acquired by the State, have been maintained out of the public revenues at the lowest possible cost. The attitude of the State to the National Museums and Galleries has for the most part been a passive and mainly receptive attitude. Development has been spasmodic. Three quarters of a century elapsed between the foundation of the British Museum, with its historic and scientific collections, and the foundation of the National Gallery in 1824. Thereafter, especially during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, and mainly owing to the efforts of the Prince Consort, progress was more rapid. With the enormous expansion of knowledge it has been inevitable that

¹ Letters to the Chairman from the Duke of Alba, Dr. F. Schmidt Degener and Dr. H. A. Krüss will be found in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this report, letters from Mr. B. Berenson, Dr. M. J. Von Friedländer, Dr. S. Reinach and Professor Venturi in the Volume of Evidence accompanying the Interim Report.

the emphasis on various aspects of science, of history or of art should be differentiated. But the primary fact which must be taken into account is the profoundly individualistic development of the National Institutions. Even where the Museum or Gallery comes under the governance, not of Trustees, but of a Department, it has developed very much in its own way. The position to-day is therefore this. The nation possesses in its Museums and Galleries an inheritance of inestimable wealth, spiritual and material, gathered together and administered in a number of separate citadels. Each of these Institutions has its own personality, its genius of place, its devoted band of patrons and disciples. The excellent results of this individualistic development are apparent. But there are also results less excellent, and with these we must now deal.

Defects in the present organisation.

4. Co-operation between kindred Institutions is too often absent. There has been insufficient definition of objective, and too little interchange of ideas. These are defects which concern each individual Institution. But there are defects of a more far-reaching character which are external to the Institutions and arise from the circumstances of their development. There is no united and dynamic connection between the national and the provincial institutions. There is not even a single Body or Department of State which has a care for the wellbeing of the National Museums and Galleries as a whole. The Treasury is, in the majority of cases, the only Department with which the authorities of the Institutions have direct relations, and it is certainly not the function of the Treasury to play the part of a benevolent or solicitous parent. A balancing of the claims of different Museums and Galleries, unless based on broad grounds of general policy, is liable to result in indefinite postponement of urgent work of reconstruction and development, and to produce precisely such a state of affairs as that which confronted Your Majesty's present Commission on their appointment. That such a system has not hitherto resulted in complete failure is a proof of the good sense and intelligence of those who in the past have had to work under conditions so unfavourable.

As we have already emphasised in our Interim Report, the National Museums and Galleries are essentially educational Institutions. Nevertheless, for the last twenty-five years, their development measured in terms of State support has advanced hardly at all as compared with the development of Elementary Education, Secondary Education or University Education. The Exchequer expenditure in respect of these three forms of education in England and Wales has in this period increased approximately as follows : Elementary Education threefold ; Secondary and Technical Education eightfold ; University Education nineteenfold. In the case of the National Museums and Galleries expenditure has increased twofold : in other words, taking account

of the change in the value of money, it has almost stood still.⁽¹⁾ We do not suggest that expenditure in respect of the National Museums and Galleries should have proceeded at the same pace as expenditure in respect of other forms of education. But it seems to us that so great a disparity is an indication not only of a lack of appreciation of the purpose of these Institutions, but of a definite defect in the relations between them on the one side and governmental authority on the other.

The Need for some Form of Central Co-ordination.

5. The lack of appreciation of the true purpose of the National Institutions is perhaps partly the fault of the Institutions themselves, in so far as it arises from an insufficiently developed contact with the public. But the real cause is that self-centred development to which we have called attention.

The problem for solution is not simple. We do not desire to see the National Museums and Galleries placed under the control of a single Department of State as is the practice on the Continent. In almost every country in Europe the supreme administrative authority in the case of the State Museums and Galleries is the Ministry of Public Instruction. Such a system is alien to the traditions under which the English Institutions have developed. The cardinal difference between the English system and the system, for instance, which prevails in Germany, has been well expressed by Dr. Friedländer :

“ The great advantage of the English system, which has been successfully applied in America in a somewhat different form, is that art lovers of means and of public spirit, especially collectors in their capacity as Trustees, consider the Museum as their own cause and feel it their duty to support the Museum and to make sacrifices for it by gifts and testamentary dispositions. In Germany the cultivation of art is chiefly left to the State, in itself an impersonal being without relation to the arts, which transfers all power and all responsibility to the hands of its trained officials. The brilliant development of the London Museums seems to prove that for British conditions at least, their system of administration is the right one. One must not forget, however, that the soil on which the British national collections have grown was incomparably rich and fertile. They had the benefit of a tradition of rich and extensive private collectorship and of the chances offered by the richest art market in the world. On the other hand there were hardly any private collectors of importance in Berlin when the Museums were formed and no art market to speak of. The English Museums grew up naturally; the German had to be fostered with painstaking tenacity.”⁽²⁾

¹ See Appendices II and III, pages 57-58, Interim Report.

² Dr. Friedländer's letter to Lord D'Abernon, pages 304-305, Volume of Evidence, Appendices, etc., Interim Report.

The English Institutions have grown up partly under the administration of Boards of Trustees and partly under the administration of particular Departments of State.

The following Museums and Galleries are governed by Boards of Trustees :—

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) The British Museum ... | } The same Board. |
| (2) The Natural History Museum ... | |
| (3) The National Gallery. | |
| (4) The Tate Gallery. | |
| (5) The National Portrait Gallery. | |
| (6) The Wallace Collection. | |
| (7) The London Museum. | |
| (8) The Imperial War Museum. | |
| (9) The National Gallery, Scotland ... | } The same Board. |
| (10) The National Portrait Gallery, Scotland ... | |
| (11) The National Library, Scotland. | |
| (12) The Scottish Museum of Antiquities ... | } The same Board as the National Galleries but through the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. |

The following Museums and Galleries come under the control of Departments :—

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) The Victoria and Albert Museum ... | } Board of Education. |
| (2) The Bethnal Green Museum ... | |
| (3) The Science Museum ... | |
| (4) The Royal Scottish Museum ... | } Scottish Education Department. |
| (5) The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew ... | } Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. |
| (6) The Geological Survey and Museum ... | } Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. |

The Record Offices of England and Scotland are under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Rolls and the Lord Clerk Register respectively.

Generally, and without prejudice to certain suggestions which we reserve for Part II of our Report, we do not think that any drastic change in the government of the individual Institutions

would be beneficial. Examined as separate entities each of them has abundantly justified its existence and has been well served by its governing authority and by its expert advisers. We consider, however, that the system in force at the National Gallery of Scotland and recently adopted at the National Gallery, under which the Trustees are not appointed for life but for periods not exceeding seven years, being then eligible for re-appointment, should be extended to other Boards of Trustees, bringing in new blood, younger and more active men and replacing those who, for reasons of health or inability to give the necessary time and attention to their duties, are no longer effective as units on the Board. Subject to the permanence of present life appointments, we recommend therefore that a system of periodical retirement should be adopted by governing bodies wherever possible. The defects in the English system, to which we have called attention in paragraph 4, can, in our view, be remedied without violent organic change.

Alternative methods of securing the desired end of Co-ordination.

6. We have very carefully considered the various alternative proposals which have been put before us, whether by representative bodies or by individuals, and we find general agreement that co-ordination is necessary, but divergence of view as to how it should be effected. The following comprehensive suggestions have been made to us for the co-ordination of the Institutions as a whole :

(i) that all the Museums and Galleries should be brought under the aegis either of the President of the Board of Education⁽¹⁾, or of the Lord President of the Council⁽²⁾, or of the First Commissioner of Works⁽³⁾;

(ii) that a supreme body of Trustees should be created, and all the possessions of the Institutions vested in that body⁽⁴⁾;

(iii) that a central administrative or supervisory committee or council should be nominated⁽⁵⁾;

(iv) that some form of joint board, representing the governing bodies, might meet occasionally to tender advice to the Government⁽⁶⁾;

(v) that a standing national commission on Museums should be created⁽⁷⁾.

¹ Mr. E. R. D. MacLagan, Q. 2903. Sudeley Committee, Memo. p. 285. Vol. Evidence accompanying Int. Rep. (see also Note by the Rt. Hon. C. P. Trevelyan, M.P., accompanying Memo. of Sudeley Committee). Sir Arthur Keith, Q. 1725, 1755 and 1757. Sir Arthur Keith was specially concerned with the Science Museums at South Kensington, Q. 1682.

² The Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, Q. 3169.

³ Sudeley Committee, Memo. p. 285, Vol. Evidence accompanying Int. Rep.

⁴ Mr. D. S. MacColl, Q. 4635.

⁵ Design and Industries Association, Memo. p. 266, Vol. Evidence accompanying Interim Report. National Art Collections Fund, Memo. p. 277 ditto.

⁶ Sir Frederic Kenyon, Q. 727-732.

⁷ British Institute of Adult Education, Memo. p. 256 ditto. Tutors Association, Memo. p. 289 ditto.

We have further had regard to the recommendation contained in the notable Report of Lord Haldane's Committee on the Machinery of Government; that "the responsible authorities [of the National Museums] might consider with advantage the possibility of entering into regular arrangements, by means of a body representative of each of the Museums and established for the purpose, whereby the spheres of the respective Museums should be arranged with a view to the avoidance of competition for objects, and to the development of each Museum to the full as a centre of education and research."⁽¹⁾ It is, however, clear that this suggestion took account only of the National Museums and not of the National Galleries;⁽²⁾ nor did it deal with other Institutions contained in our Terms of Reference.⁽³⁾

The disadvantages of the first three suggestions stated above are that, sooner or later, they would inevitably tend in the direction of the Continental system of bureaucratic control—unsuited, as we think, to the national character—or else that they would sap the sense of responsibility of the individual governing authorities. The weakness of the fourth suggestion is that the Joint Board would have a status so casual as to be ineffective. The fifth alternative takes account only of the Museums, on the lines of the recommendation made by Lord Haldane's Committee.

Standing Commission in respect of all the Institutions.

7. After a careful survey of all the circumstances, our recommendation is that a Standing Commission in respect of the Institutions named in our Terms of Reference and of such others as it may hereafter be deemed desirable to include should be appointed forthwith by Your Majesty's Government with the following functions:—

(a) To review in each year the draft estimates of the National Museums and Galleries, to advise generally on the position, and to make such recommendations as they think fit. The object of this review should be to discourage extravagance on the one hand, and on the other to secure that, before the estimates are presented to Parliament, rival claims have been fairly assessed and a broad view of the general position taken.

(b) To promote needful co-ordination between the National Institutions themselves, and between the National Institutions and the Provincial Museums and Galleries, and to advise on questions relevant to the more effective development of the Institutions as a whole.

It would be the duty of this body, in addition to its other functions, to stimulate the generosity and direct the efforts of those who aspire to become public benefactors. It is only by

¹ Report, Cd. 9320 (1918), p. 56, para. 16.

² Ditto, p. 55, para. 14.

³ e.g. The Scottish Institutions, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and the Public Record Office.

a development in this direction that the Exchequer can look for relief.

Such a body would have no executive power and therefore would not override or interfere with the existing Trustee and Departmental authorities. It would effect the desired end of co-ordination and greater unity of effort through its central position and prestige. Its influence would be exerted by way of constructive suggestion, counsel and mediation, not by way of veto, domination and control. Had such a body been in existence at an earlier date, we cannot think that the growth of the National Institutions would have been—as it has been—a painful history of periods of stagnation alternating with sudden and costly spasms of progress;¹ that the useful reports of many committees would have been so long neglected; that the development of great Museum sites would have been jeopardised by unorganised, promiscuous and casual plans, or prejudiced by the erection of insignificant and squalid buildings; finally, that the gulf between the National and the Provincial Institutions would have been so wide as it is to-day.

Constitution of the proposed Commission.

8. We recommend that the proposed body should be composed partly of members selected from the governing authorities, whether Trustee or Departmental, and partly from distinguished persons outside those authorities. The Chairman must have the same ready access to the Prime Minister and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as he would have, if he were a member of the Ministry. For the sake of efficiency it is essential that the body should not be too large. We would suggest that members should automatically retire after a period of seven years, being eligible, however, for reappointment.

Need for clearer definition of policy in the case of each Institution.

9. Greater unity of effort and the best possible development of the resources at the disposal of each of the Institutions will not be secured solely by the constitution of such a body as that recommended in the preceding paragraphs. To secure these ends, it will be necessary for the authorities of each of the National Institutions in co-operation with the proposed representative body, to formulate and to follow, to a greater extent than has been the case hitherto, broad lines of policy

¹ "The growth of the British Museum, as expressed in the extension of its buildings, has been a series of spasms, provoked by extreme congestion, recurring almost immediately after each temporary alleviation. In each case the expansion has only been taken in hand when the congestion was already acute, and by the time it was completed the needs of the Museum had usually overtaken the new provision afforded by it, and a fresh period of congestion began at once to set in." (Article by Sir Frederic Kenyon in "The Nineteenth Century," November, 1924, p. 709).

See also, as regards the South Kensington Collections, the extract from the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1897-98, quoted as a footnote, page 17 of our Interim Report.

extending beyond the immediate present, with a view (i) to the definition of objectives and the avoidance of unnecessary overlapping; (ii) to development of their primary purpose and the most effective use of their purchasing power. In the brief account of the growth of the Institutions in our Interim Report we indicated the broad distinctions between them, and the need which each Institution was designed to satisfy when it came into being. The question of overlapping between Institutions has necessarily been pursued at great length and in great detail in the Volumes of Evidence accompanying this and our Interim Reports: we do not doubt that the question will continue to form a subject of discussion as long as Museums and Galleries exist.

Briefly, our conclusions on this matter are as follows:—

(1) A certain measure of overlapping is probably inevitable because the same objects have significance from different points of view. Thus the main purpose of the objects in the Museum of Practical Geology is to illustrate the stratigraphy of this country, especially from the standpoint of the Survey: whereas the palaeontological collections of the Natural History Museum are arranged on a biological basis so as to illustrate the evolution of life in all parts of the world. The memorandum submitted to us by the Royal Society, and printed as an Appendix to our Interim Report, defines with lucidity the distinctive purposes of the Scientific Institutions, and to that memorandum we direct the interested reader. As regards the Artistic and Literary Institutions, the question of overlapping is further complicated by the fact that humanistic studies have their roots more deeply in the past, and have consequently been developed on a much wider front. It is significant that, of the twenty Institutions named in our Terms of Reference, four only are Scientific,¹ the remainder being concerned either with Literature or with Art. It is an additional embarrassment that magnificent bequests, which under an ideal scheme might perhaps have been made more appropriately to one Institution have deliberately been made by the testator to another. With the question of Bequests we deal hereafter; we merely refer to it here because it is vital to the consideration of the problem of overlapping. It must continually be borne in mind that the unrivalled splendour of the national possessions is due in very large measure to the noble generosity of benefactors many of whom have had an affection for a particular Institution.

(2) The position generally as to overlapping will be seen in clearer perspective if it be remembered that the National Institutions situated in the London area have to minister

¹ i.e. The Natural History Museum, the Science Museum, the Museum of Practical Geology, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. It should, however, be remembered that the Royal Scottish Museum illustrates science as well as art.

to the diverse needs⁽¹⁾ not merely of the Metropolitan population—some $7\frac{1}{2}$ million persons⁽²⁾—but of visitors from all parts of the country and from abroad. In our view the question of primary importance is less whether there are three collections of Water-Colours, or two collections of Ceramics, or six Picture Galleries, than how these educational resources, which in the circumstances are certainly not excessive, can be utilised to the best advantage. The aim must be the widest possible radiation of the influence of the arts and sciences through united effort. This end can only be attained by constant co-operation between the authorities of the various Institutions.

More organised system of Inter-communication.

10. We recommend that regular meetings should be arranged between the Directors of the National Institutions, and held, say, twice a year, with a view to the interchange of ideas and the discussion of questions which must inevitably arise from time to time concerning the convenience, not only of students, but of the public. In addition we think that Directors of kindred Institutions and Keepers of kindred departments therein should meet at regular intervals. We strongly endorse the opinion expressed in the memorandum submitted to us by Sir Frederic Kenyon on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum: that "there would be advantage in a more organised system of inter-communication. Periodical meetings of Directors and of Heads of Departments would lead to more uniformity in the treatment of kindred problems and would give occasion for the staff of one Museum to visit another. . . . With this object in view it would be desirable that, if periodical meetings should be instituted, they should be held in the different Institutions in succession, and should include an inspection of any recent novelties or additions."⁽³⁾ Nor is this all. As Sir Frederic says in the same passage, "visits to other museums, whether at home or abroad, may be very useful in suggesting new ideas." The possibility of making such visits should therefore be open to the junior members of the staff as well as to the Directors and Heads of Departments. The arrangement under which Assistants in the Royal Scottish Museum periodically spend three weeks or a month in the British Museum or in the Victoria and Albert Museum⁽⁴⁾ might well be imitated

¹ Namely (a) of scholars engaged in higher research, (b) of amateur students, collectors and persons especially interested in some particular aspect of science, literature or art, (c) of the uninstructed public. The total attendance at the National Institutions in the London area in 1928 was 6,935,911.

² The population of London alone exceeds the population of the Netherlands: for the number and variety of the National Institutions of the Netherlands see the Volume of Evidence accompanying the Interim Report, pages 323-324.

³ Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report, page 54.

⁴ Evidence of Sir F. G. Kenyon, Q. 871 and 872. See also the evidence of Mr. A. O. Curle: "It has been a great advantage to send our younger officers to the Victoria and Albert Museum, both to get to know the officers better there and so improve our co-ordination . . ." Q. 1112.

and extended. In this connexion, we desire to recommend that generally there should be a greater liberality in the matter of travelling allowances for the staffs of the National Museums and Galleries. In our view the present opportunities for travel are inadequate and the duty of travelling insufficiently appreciated.

Conspicuous examples of the need of Co-operative effort.

11.—(1) **The National Libraries.**—The need for co-operative effort in the case of the great National Libraries is specially apparent. But while it is true that regular inter-communication in the past would have led to a more advantageous use of the resources of the National Museums and Galleries, it cannot be said that rigorous economy has not been exercised in respect of the grants which have been available for library purposes. Thus the exiguous purchase grant of the Science Library has remained unchanged for half a century, during which prices have greatly increased, while we understand that the total sum available at the British Museum for the purchase of foreign books and periodicals does not exceed £5,000 a year. We shall deal further with this matter in Part II of our Report. The question with which we are here concerned is whether, either with the present resources or with such increased resources as may hereafter become available, mutual collaboration would not lead to a more effective utilisation and development of the National Libraries. Such mutual collaboration would, we think, be of particular benefit in the matter of the purchase of expensive foreign books and periodicals. The authorities of the British Museum have indicated to us their willingness to co-operate with the Science Museum in the selection of foreign periodicals to be purchased by either institution, so as to avoid duplication and unnecessary expenditure on periodicals for which the demand is limited. We think that this co-operation might usefully be extended to the great Patent Office Library which, under the aegis of the Board of Trade, specialises in scientific and technical books and publications of all kinds for the main purpose of assisting research in matters bearing directly and indirectly on trade and industry.⁽¹⁾ Similarly, on the side of Art, it would seem to be highly desirable that more intimate relations should exist between the extensive Art Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum.

We do not think that it would be advantageous to define too strictly the precise method of collaboration which should exist between these four great State Libraries. The simplest procedure, in the first instance, would presumably be for the responsible heads of each of these Libraries to meet together, under the chairmanship of the Principal Librarian of the British Museum, with a view to working out the most efficient method

¹ For a compendious account of the Patent Office Library see the memorandum furnished by the authorities of that Library, printed in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

of future co-operation. Such a method of co-operation would involve no surrender of individual independence or initiative on the part of the institutions in question. The system of individual growth has been so rich in its result—it will probably not be disputed that London is the most important and extensive library centre in the world—that we do not favour a change to any hard and fast system of centralised control. We are, however, convinced that the time has come when some form of collaboration as between the principal State Libraries in London would be in the general interest. It is possible that it might subsequently be found desirable to extend the principle of regular co-operation to other non-State specialist libraries, e.g., the Libraries of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and of Surgeons and those connected with the University of London, if the authorities of those libraries concurred. The essential end in view is that the authorities of each great library should so concentrate their energies as to be able to expend their limited resources to the maximum advantage. Such a result can only be reached by methodical consultation and mutual agreement.

(2) **The Ceramic Collections at the British Museum and at the Victoria and Albert Museum.**—The principal purpose of the British Museum is to facilitate the study of the history of civilisations; its Departments of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, of Greek and Roman Antiquities, of British and Mediaeval Antiquities are organised with this end in view. The principal purpose of the Victoria and Albert Museum, on the other hand, is the illustration of the various arts with a view especially to the inspiration of the artist and the craftsman. Accordingly its departmental scheme of arrangement is that of classification by material—woodwork, textiles, metalwork, ceramics, etc. The existence of a Department of Ceramics at the Victoria and Albert Museum is a clear necessity of primary function. The existence of a Ceramics Department, as such, at the British Museum is not a necessity of primary function. This is not to say that the British Museum ought not to possess ceramics. The study of the history of civilisations cannot be divorced from the study of their art, and, in fact, the beginnings of the Chinese, Japanese and Italian Maiolica Collections date from the great collections of Sir Hans Sloane, which formed the basis of the Museum at its incorporation in 1753.⁽¹⁾ The anomaly consists rather in the recent establishment at the British Museum of a Department based, in effect, on a classification by material. Nor is the present arrangement consistent in itself, for the renowned collection of Greek vases is not included in the Department, but finds its logical and proper place in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities.

A partial solution of the present anomalous position of the Department of Ceramics at the British Museum will be found if and when either a Museum or a Department of Oriental Antiquities is created. With the need for such a Museum or Department we deal separately.

¹ Q. 3246.

As regards the question of overlapping with the Victoria and Albert Museum we think that the practical remedy in this as in other cases is the development of a definite scheme of co-operation between the two Museums, with a view especially (a) to the interchange of loans, (b) to the most effective use of purchasing power, (c) to the promotion of facilities for students and (d) to adherence, as far as possible, to the specialised function of the respective collections.⁽¹⁾

(3) **The National Collections of Water-Colours.**—In London, the nation is in possession of three Collections of Water-Colours of prime importance, namely, those included in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, in the Departments of Paintings and Engravings, Illustration and Design at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and that possessed by the Tate Gallery. These three collections have grown up independently and owe their present size and magnificence very largely, if not mainly, to numberless bequests and gifts. From time to time, various enquiries have been held as to whether any redistribution of the National Collections of Water-Colours was desirable. The Committee of Re-arrangement of the Victoria and Albert Museum which reported⁽²⁾ in 1908, and the Curzon Committee, which examined the problem in 1911-13,⁽³⁾ both reported in favour of a considerable measure of redistribution. Their reports, however, in this respect have not been acted upon.

We have already indicated in paragraph 9 our general views on the question of overlapping. But it is relevant to amplify those views here by the following observation. In considering the development of the National Institutions and in reviewing the situation from the angle not of one Institution, but of all, we are impressed by the failure of proposals which would have involved drastic legislative interference with the historic traditions and possessions of individual Institutions. The reason of this failure is perhaps not far to seek. It has arisen, we think, from an inadequate realisation of the outstanding part played by public spirited persons in building up the national inheritance. Many of these persons had a special predilection for one Institution rather than another, and powerful groups of supporters among the intelligent public have followed in their footsteps. Nor is it uninteresting to observe the consequence of statutory action even of so moderate a character as, for example, that of the National Gallery Sales Act of 1856. It would seem that the disposition of the famous Sheepshanks Collection, which was left to the Victoria and Albert Museum

¹ The position as to the two great National Collections of Ceramics has been very fully and frankly discussed before us by Mr. R. L. Hobson, and Mr. B. Rackham, the Keepers of those Departments at the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum respectively. See the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report. Q. 3246-3445.

² Report, Cd. 4389.

³ Report, Cd. 7878, which was published in 1915.

in 1857, was directly affected by that Act. "The said pictures and drawings . . . shall not be subject to the provisions of the Act of the 19 and 20 Victoria, cap. 29, intituled 'An Act to extend the Powers of the Trustees and Director of the National Gallery, and to authorise the Sale of Works of Art belonging to the Public', or to any future enactment of the Legislature, which, but for this declaration to the contrary, shall have the effect of placing the said pictures and drawings under any other care or ordering than is therein prescribed, or would otherwise alter or interfere with the disposition thereof hereby made."⁽¹⁾ Subsequently, makers of other important bequests of paintings (e.g., the Dyce and Forster Bequests to the Victoria and Albert Museum) were equally concerned to forestall, if possible, interference by the Legislature.⁽²⁾

This aspect of the question—considered by itself—would not deter us from recommending overriding legislation if we thought that any ideal purpose would be served by the concentration of three very large collections into one. But we think that the day has long gone by for grandiose amalgamation, and that the practical solution here, as in the other cases already dealt with, is intelligent co-operation and inter-loan between kindred Institutions. With this end in view, we have indeed already suggested informally that an arrangement should be arrived at between the authorities of the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Tate Gallery. Accordingly, the draft of such an arrangement has been drawn up after consultation between the Directors, and it has, we understand, been endorsed in principle by the governing authorities of those Institutions. A copy of this proposed agreement is printed as an appendix to this Report.⁽³⁾ It will be observed that it provides for a system of inter-loan of water-colours and drawings between the three Institutions for general and for particular occasions. Furthermore, it outlines a scheme for the best utilisation of the noble Collection of Drawings bequeathed by Turner to the Nation which formed the subject of a memorial to the Prime Minister in April, 1928.⁽⁴⁾ We recommend that this draft agreement should be put into force as soon as possible. Any modifications of detail, which may be deemed desirable

¹ Mr. Sheepshanks' Deed of Gift quoted in the memorandum submitted by the Board of Education, page 332, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that the National Gallery Loan Act of 1883 relieved the incubus of the dead hand, as far as that Gallery was concerned, yet with due regard to the susceptibilities of the benefactor, by providing that any picture acquired under gift or bequest might be lent after 15 years, and any picture bequeathed under restrictive conditions after 25 years from the date of its coming into the possession of the Trustees. No untoward circumstances seem to have followed this modest attempt to reconcile the claims of the dead and of the living.

³ See Appendix I.

⁴ See Appendix 6 Vol. Evidence etc. accompanying the Interim Report, pp. 340-1.

in the light of further experience, can be settled from time to time by inter-departmental co-operation. Meanwhile, we would emphasise the importance of the proposed agreement as illustrating the practical possibilities and advantages to be derived from intelligent co-operation.

In calling attention to this question, we wish to lay especial emphasis on one important aspect of a free measure of inter-loan between the various National Art Collections. Those Collections contain a wealth of material, representative of the best work of all, or almost all, the great Masters. It would be difficult to exaggerate the extent of their resources, and the benefit which would be derived from the intelligent use of those resources, especially in the case of a centenary or other special exhibition of the works of a particular artist, or of a particular school. At the present time, each Collection possesses magnificent examples of particular schools or artists; but little or no attempt has been made to hold any united exhibition of works of outstanding genius. We believe that, if such exhibitions were held from time to time, the effect, having regard to the extent of the resources available, would be comparable to that produced by the recent special exhibitions at Burlington House. Nor can we admit that the interest of students would suffer in any way by such special exhibitions: on the contrary, we believe that they would greatly benefit: while the advantage to a wider public would be incalculable. We are not aware that the authorities of the principal National Art Collections are hampered by statutory enactments from making loans, if those enactments are interpreted in a liberal spirit.⁽¹⁾ In any case, should amending legislation be found necessary for this purpose, we think that it should be carried through with the least possible delay.⁽²⁾

The Need for United Endeavour.

12. Stated summarily, the outstanding need at the present time appears to us to consist in the kinetic use of resources, whether artistic, scientific or literary, by co-operative endeavour. Surveying the field as a whole, we see a number of Institutions each absorbed in its own concerns, and paying too little heed to the interests of its neighbour. This spirit of almost eremitic isolation is a mistake. Untempered individualism we deem to be harmful to the best interests of the Institutions themselves, unhelpful to students and detrimental to the public. In the

We have particularly in mind the Act 14 & 15 Geo. V, c. 23, which enables the Trustees of the British Museum to make loans, not only of duplicates, but of any object "which in their opinion can be temporarily removed from the Museum without injury to the interests of students or of the public visiting the exhibition galleries of the Museum."

² Legislation merely involving loans is, in our opinion, in a wholly different category from legislation which would involve any permanent separation or dispersal of possessions.

preceding paragraphs we have indicated various particular fields⁽¹⁾ in which co-operative effort is conspicuously necessary, and we are glad to note that the need for such an effort has been appreciated by a number of the most important witnesses who have given evidence before us. But, in this connection, there is one general recommendation which we desire to emphasise strongly. Special exhibitions apart, the National Institutions should be far less chary than they are at present of lending to one another on a permanent or semi-permanent basis. Where circumstances are suitable, such a policy, judiciously pursued, should do much to eliminate any risk of wasteful and useless overlapping.

Relations between National Institutions and Provincial Museums and Galleries.

13. So far, we have been concerned with the relations between the National Institutions themselves. It will now be necessary to consider the relations between the National Institutions and the Provincial Museums and Galleries. The need for a closer organic connexion between these is apparent. This need has been conspicuously brought out in the recent Report on the Public Museums of the British Isles, presented to the Carnegie United Kingdom Trustees by one of our own number, Sir Henry Miers. It has been further emphasised in evidence before us by the Museums Association, by the President of the Society of Antiquaries and by many other witnesses. We endorse the opinion of the Museums Association that "not until such a relationship has been established will the Museum movement fulfil its proper function as an instrument of education in the country."⁽²⁾ The defects in the present organisation of the Provincial Museums and Galleries, the haphazard distribution of some five hundred Institutions in Great Britain, the excellent use made of Museums by some Local Authorities and the almost complete neglect of them by others, the remarkable resources and services available—all these matters have been dealt with in the report of Sir Henry Miers. In brief, the outstanding fact in the case both of the National and of the Provincial Institutions is that hitherto they have been treated as the "poor relations" among the social services. The public mind appears to have been bewitched by a polysyllabic classification of education as Elementary, Secondary, Technical and University. Meanwhile the manifold services rendered by Museums and Galleries to all classes of the population, to the most learned and the least learned, have escaped attention. We are glad to note that a less rigid organisation of educational forces is now in con-

There are many others: we have simply illustrated the need for co-operative effort by certain examples.

² Memo. of Museums Association, Vol. Evidence accompanying Int. Rep. p. 137.

templation by the Board of Education.⁽¹⁾ When that has been achieved it may be possible to secure that greater attention is paid to the needs of children of school age. From time to time opportunities might be taken of teaching them before selected exhibits. In London classes for pupils and classes for teachers have been arranged by the Science Museum, the London Museum and the Bethnal Green Museum in collaboration with the London County Council.⁽²⁾ It is true that these Institutions, from their special character, are particularly adapted to meet the needs of such classes, but a more active policy in this matter might with advantage be followed by school and education authorities in co-operation with certain other of the National Institutions. In Edinburgh, we are informed that the fullest use is made of the National Gallery by the Edinburgh Education Authority and that parties of school children are taken round by a lecturer every school day. The system has been in use for some time and yields excellent results.⁽³⁾ There has for many years been similar contact between the Royal Scottish Museum and the Education Authority.

The duty of remedying the main defects in the case of a rate-aided service—inadequacy of staff, pay, buildings, methods of display, co-operation with school authorities⁽⁴⁾—plainly lies with the Local Authorities themselves. But there are certain directions in which much assistance can be given from a central source, and with these we are concerned.

Loans to Provincial Institutions, Schools of Art and Secondary Schools.

14. The valuable services rendered to Provincial Museums, Schools of Art and Secondary Schools by the Victoria and Albert Museum—the only National Institution with a fully organised Circulation Department—have been emphasised by many witnesses both orally and in memoranda.⁽⁵⁾ There is unanimity of view that, if the system were extended to the

¹ See the speech of the President of the Board of Education in introducing the Vote of the Board to the House of Commons on April 23rd, 1929.

² Qs. 2086, 3083 and 4240.

³ Q. 3964 (evidence of Sir John Findlay).

⁴ The extent to which collaboration between schools and museums has been carried out in the United States was brought out clearly before us by Mr. Laurence Vail Coleman, Director of the American Association of Museums. See Qs. 961, 1056 and 1068-9. "It is coming to be standard practice among us that the instructors who are occupied in meeting school classes at the museum, be not under museum pay, but under the pay of the school department and that they be assigned to the museum to work under the direction of the museum director or the curator of education. They are specialised school teachers who conduct a specialised portion of school work." (Q. 1056.) The close contact between museums and all forms of education in the United States was also emphasised in the 1920 Report of the Committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, appointed to enquire into *Museums in relation to Education*.

⁵ The main evidence on this subject was that given by the representatives of the Museums Association, published in the Volume of Evidence accompanying the Interim Report, pp. 137-150.

other National Institutions, a powerful impulse would be given to the cause of education generally, and especially of art education.⁽¹⁾

In considering this matter, it is necessary to emphasise at the outset a primary distinction between Institutions which are national and Institutions which are provincial. The National Institutions are the fountain heads of knowledge, and it is their duty to provide the indispensable material for study in almost every domain of learning. In addition, their great possessions must be made as comprehensible, as attractive and as widely known as possible to the general public. A principal means to this end is the work done by the student whose researches embodied either in special memoirs and learned works published independently, or in catalogues and other publications issued by the Institutions, are ultimately interpreted through the text books in general use in schools and Universities. Any indiscriminate lending of the possessions of the National Institutions would plainly be disastrous, and defeat the very end designed to be served, namely the increase of knowledge.

The witnesses who have given evidence before us on behalf of the Museums Association were fully alive to this. They distinguished between (i) the exhibition series of the National Collections, and (ii) the essential reserves which are held for replacement, for reference and for research. From neither of these two categories did they suggest that loans either could or should be made. But they indicated that, over and above these two categories, there might be a considerable number of objects which could be lent from the National Collections without injury to those Collections. From a review of the evidence given by the official witnesses on behalf of the National Institutions, we form the impression that they are not in conflict with this view. Our own conclusion is that the National Institutions are in some

¹ Memo. of the British Institute of Industrial Art, p. 261, para. 21 Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

Memo of the London County Council, p. 272, para. 15, ditto.

Memo. of the Municipal Corporations Association, p. 274, para. 3.

Memo. of the Association of Education Committees, p. 253, para. 1.

Memo. of the Tutors Association, p. 289, para. 6a: "The Association desires to pay its tribute to the great importance and value of this work and to press for the extension of the system to cover all the National Galleries and Museums."

Memo. of the Sudeley Committee, p. 285, para. 16: "In most instances small loan collections from various Institutions, periodically changed, would be an enormous help to provincial Museums and to the important service which they would be able to render to the public throughout the country, outside the London area."

Memo. of the Federation of British Industries, p. 268, para. 5: "The great majority of the population, and particularly of the industrial population, lives in districts remote from the national museums and can seldom take advantage of them. Loans to provincial museums and schools may, therefore, have a most important educative influence transcending perhaps even that of the national museums themselves."

Memo. of Design and Industries Association, p. 266, para. 20.

Memo. of National Society of Art Masters, in the Vol. of Evidence accompanying this Report.

danger of being embarrassed by the multitude of their riches and that accumulation can be carried to excess. We therefore think that the time has come when they should seek relief by making their surplus wealth available throughout a wider area. In the nature of things it is inevitable that they themselves should be housed in London and in Edinburgh. It is too often forgotten that they do not belong to these cities alone, but to the nation as a whole, and that taxpayers everywhere have to contribute to their upkeep.

The Victoria and Albert Circulation Collection.

15. As a first step, we recommend that the other National Institutions should contribute to the Circulation Collections objects suitable for loan, and that the whole, greatly improved in quality and range, should be administered by the authorities of the Victoria and Albert Museum together with their own. In making this recommendation we desire to emphasise the following points :—

(1) We think that the principle of organisation which has governed the Circulation Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum since 1908,⁽¹⁾ is the right one. This principle is that the objects it contains should form a separate collection built up partly from objects transferred more or less permanently from the main collections, partly from special purchases out of the general purchasing grant, and partly from gifts and benefactions. The system of casual selection from the exhibition galleries, which prevailed before 1908, was not found to be satisfactory and in our view it might be found not only unsatisfactory, but quite unworkable, if the Collection were to be enlarged as we suggest by drawing upon other National Institutions.⁽²⁾

¹ Following on the carefully considered Report of the Committee of Re-arrangement, appointed by the Board of Education, 1908. Cd. 4389.

² The following passages from the Report of the 1908 Committee of Re-arrangement are relevant in this connexion :—

“The members of the Committee were all strongly in favour of taking advantage of the re-arrangement of the Museum to form as rich a collection as possible for the use of the Circulation Department, so as to render that Department independent of the collections on permanent exhibition and to remove the necessity for taking objects from the cases in the Museum for the purpose of lending them temporarily for exhibition in the provinces.

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“The investigations of the Committee thus showed that among those who had devoted attention to this subject there was a practical unanimity of feeling that it would be desirable that the objects placed on permanent exhibition should not be drawn upon, unless in exceptional circumstances, for the purpose of supplying the needs of “Circulation.” It further appeared that for some years a policy had been pursued with the object of rendering “Circulation” as independent as possible of the collections on permanent exhibition ; and that moreover by the addition of a number of objects, of value in themselves, but (owing to the richness of the collections in similar objects) not required for permanent exhibition, this independence could now be made almost complete.

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“They have, therefore, proposed that this course should be followed, and that in the process of re-arrangement the collections of the Circulation Department should be so developed as to render as rare as possible the temporary removal of objects placed on permanent exhibition.”

(2) We think it of great importance that the Circulation Collections should continue to be associated with the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁽¹⁾ From the earliest days of the foundation of that great Institution its connexion both with schools and with museums has been intimate, and has continually expanded. In 1927, loans were made to 82 local museums and 4 temporary exhibitions, to 208 art schools, 319 secondary schools and 26 training colleges.⁽²⁾ As regards loans to secondary schools, we were impressed by the observation of the Keeper of the Circulation Department: "The applications from secondary schools are steadily increasing—we have had 22 new ones this year. . . . This is all to the good, because it is not much use producing a craftsman in the art schools if there is no public to appreciate his craft and buy his goods. It is in the secondary schools that the opportunity occurs to furnish the public of to-morrow with the capacity for such appreciation."

(3) It follows from our proposal regarding the wider scope of the Circulation Collections that the present regulation, confining loans to Museums of Decorative Art, should be modified. We apprehend that this regulation can be modified without difficulty by the Board of Education, the governing authority of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and we recommend that this should be done.⁽³⁾ At present the Victoria and Albert Museum is prevented from lending objects to Institutions which are solely Picture Galleries.⁽⁴⁾ Whatever its value in the history of ideas or for purposes of academic definition, the distinction between fine and applied art has already broken down in practice. The Victoria and Albert Museum itself is no longer purely a Museum of Applied Art, but embraces all the arts. As the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Art pointed out in 1912:⁽⁵⁾ "Many great masters of antiquity, and a few such as Alfred Stevens in more recent days, have used their skill indifferently, to fresco a wall or to paint a portrait, to build a chimneypiece or to carve a bust; and there might be profit for the future if a closer approximation rather than a sharper division of the ideals of fine and of decorative art could be brought about. . . ."

¹ Q. 2808. Evidence of Mr. E. R. D. Maclagan, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum. See also the memo. submitted by Sir F. Kenyon on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum, page 54, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² Q. 3634–35. Evidence of Mr. H. A. Kennedy, Keeper of the Circulation Department, Victoria and Albert Museum.

³ The regulation in question is 85 (1) of Regulations for Technical Schools, Schools of Art, etc., 1909–10, (Cd. 4736). See also Qs. 2803, 3636 and 3696.

⁴ Q. 2803.

⁵ Cd. 5810, page 13, para. 22. See also Mr. Maclagan's evidence, Q. 2787: "I should have thought there were comparatively few people now who would maintain that a Persian rug or a Chinese pot was not fine art and a water-colour was."

We should add that the Museums Association in their evidence before us strongly urged that the circulation of collections of works of fine art should be greatly extended.⁽¹⁾

(4) Scotland is in a somewhat different position from the rest of the country owing to the existence of the Royal Scottish Museum which has developed on very much the same lines as the Victoria and Albert, so far as arts and crafts are concerned, and which was indeed at one time under the same administration. The Royal Scottish Museum cannot, of course, command resources at all comparable in richness with those of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and in its efforts to maintain touch with the local Museums and Schools within its province it has therefore restricted its activities to the circulation of Natural History specimens, leaving a clear field to the Victoria and Albert Museum in the departments which are common to both. While we think that this arrangement is a very proper one in the circumstances and that it ought to continue, we cannot but regard it as unfortunate that the Art Department of the Royal Scottish Museum should miss the opportunity, which its Natural History Department enjoys, of establishing friendly relations with the various local institutions concerned. We recommend that the position be discussed between the two Directors with a view to evolving some scheme of co-operation. Even if the Royal Scottish Museum were to be no more than the medium of communication between the Victoria and Albert Museum and the borrowing institutions to the north of the Border, we believe that a good deal would be gained.

Accommodation for the enlarged Circulation Collections.

16. The space occupied by the existing Circulation Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum is already congested, and for the proper carrying on of the activities of that Department the provision of further accommodation is very necessary.⁽²⁾ It is clear that our proposals will accentuate the accommodation difficulty. The solution of the problem of congestion at the Victoria and Albert Museum is far from simple, and other aspects of this problem are dealt with elsewhere in this Report. One way of providing for the enlarged Circulation Collection which we advocate would be to find accommodation for it in the premises at present occupied by the Royal College of Art. This proposal involves the provision of a new building for the Royal College of Art, a plan which we understand has been in contemplation for many years. The site designed for the proposed new College is that at present occupied by the Institut Français. We urge that this long-delayed scheme should at last be undertaken and carried

¹ Q. 1925.

² Memo. of the Board of Education, p. 337, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report. See also Mr. Maclagan's evidence, Q. 2808.

through with all convenient speed. We note that as long ago as 1911-12 the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Art thought it right to put on record their opinion "that the existing buildings are neither in dignity nor in convenience worthy of a national establishment."⁽¹⁾

Meanwhile, pending the provision of additional accommodation, it may be found possible to develop the present department on its administrative side as a clearing house for correspondence between the Provincial Institutions and the National Institutions in London. There would be many advantages in having a single Central Department for this purpose. Its recognition as such would facilitate the loan operations that are at present carried on by the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery and the Print Department of the British Museum, and might make easier the establishment of the more extensive system which we shall adumbrate presently. Moreover, the existing staff are familiar from long experience with local conditions, and could advise the other National Institutions on a matter of prime importance, namely the safety and efficiency of the Provincial Museum or Gallery which applied for a loan. In this latter respect the Department could have a great influence in securing better Museum accommodation in the provinces by recommending the refusal of loans where the accommodation was not satisfactory.⁽²⁾

We should like to see the principle of circulation definitely extended on as wide a scale as possible to scientific objects, especially specimens of natural history. The best method of accomplishing this end will, we trust, receive the attention of the permanent Commission whose creation we have advocated.

Development of a Scheme of Affiliation between the National and the Provincial Institutions.

17. But a proper organic connexion between the National and the Provincial Institutions will not be secured merely by a system of loans from an enlarged Central Circulation Collection. If the best utilization of the manifold resources of both the National and the Provincial Institutions is to be secured, we think that some scheme of affiliation will be essential. Each of the great National Institutions should enter into direct relations with at least the more important of those in the provinces. It must be prepared to lend freely out of its abundance on a semi-permanent basis,⁽³⁾ wherever the necessary safeguards are provided. It must

¹ Report of the Committee, Cd. 5810, p. 24. On the question of present and future accommodation for the Royal College of Art, see the evidence of Professor Rothenstein, Qs. 3448, 3451-54, and 3470-75.

² Q. 1928-9.

³ From this statement we of course except the Public Record Offices in England and Scotland, whose character is wholly different from that of the other National Institutions included in our Terms of Reference. Moreover, the Wallace Collection is a static collection, bequeathed to the nation under precise conditions, and our remarks here do not apply to that Collection. Nor, obviously, do they apply to the National Libraries considered as such.

be ready to help with advice, when called upon, and even to stimulate local interest through personal visits of members of its staff.

In Scotland promising experiments on these lines have been made by the Trustees of the National Galleries and by the authorities of the Royal Scottish Museum. But the most complete and most highly organised scheme that has come under our notice is that which exists in Wales as between the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff and the Local Museums. We understand that the terms of affiliation are that the Local Museum is responsible for the proper housing and arrangement of all objects under its charge. Expert advice and assistance is given by a qualified member of the staff of the National Museum, who visits each affiliated Museum once a year. Furthermore, under the Welsh scheme there is a mutual interchange of objects between the Local Museums and the National Museum. This point is of great importance as it means that the arrangement is not purely one-sided, and that the local Institution gives something in return for what it receives. It should be remembered that in a number of Provincial Institutions there are objects of national importance which might with advantage be exhibited, for short periods at least, in the Metropolitan Institutions. The development of such a scheme in England and Scotland, will need very careful consideration, and the detailed arrangements must depend on a full examination of administrative problems by the Standing Commission whose creation we have recommended. We can only here state our belief that some such development is essential if the present educational resources of the nation are to be mobilised with efficiency.⁽¹⁾

The Problem of Loans Overseas.

18. It will be well, before examining the present legal position as regards loans overseas, to consider the question in its general aspects: for the question of desirability depends on a balancing of advantages and disadvantages. With the recent exhibitions of Flemish and Dutch Art at Burlington House fresh in mind, it would be difficult to overstate the stimulus of a concentration of so many examples of artistic genius. Moreover, the influence of such exhibitions is not confined to the aesthetic pleasure afforded to the vast crowds who visit them: it must help towards a better understanding between nations.

As against these advantages the following disadvantages must be duly weighed:—(1) the risk of possible damage, e.g. in transit owing to jolting, or to changes of temperature or climate, (2) the

¹ The advantages to be derived from a scheme of affiliation have been emphasised by Mr. C. R. Peers, President of the Society of Antiquaries, in his evidence. See also the evidence of Mr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler, Keeper and Secretary of the London Museum, Q. 3087, and the Report of Sir Henry Miers on Public Museums of the British Isles, p. 27, for an account of the Welsh system. An experiment in federation is being made in the Liverpool area by the Lancashire and Cheshire Museums Federation.

inconvenience caused either to members of the public or still more to students who visit one of the European Collections for the purpose of examining there a particular object only to find it absent. On the other hand, one student's loss in this respect may be another's gain in that the latter has an opportunity of seeing what he might never see in any other way. It would be foolish to under-rate either of these objections, which have not been urged in this country only. The Minister of Public Instruction and of Fine Arts reported to the President of the French Republic on May 12th, 1928 :—" Aux risques graves que comporte toute déplacement de tableaux ou de sculptures s'ajoutent les inconvénients d'une absence souvent prolongée qui suscite les vives critiques du public et de la presse. Il paraît donc nécessaire de réglementer les conditions dans lesquelles toute oeuvre appartenant aux musées nationaux pourra désormais être exceptionnellement distraite du département dont elle fait partie." ⁽¹⁾ Again, the Royal Academy of Belgium on the 4th August, 1927, unanimously transmitted to the Minister of Science and of Art the following resolution : " Considérant qu'en dehors des risques inhérents à tout déplacement et transport, les tableaux sont très exposés à des dommages qui résultent presque inévitablement des changements de température et de conditions hygrométriques, danger qui existe surtout pour les peintures sur bois, La Classe des Beaux-Arts de l'Académie royale de Belgique émet l'avis qu'il y a quelques oeuvres d'une importance artistique et d'une signification historique telles qu'elles ne devraient être déplacées en aucun cas ; une liste devrait en être dressée après consultation des autorités compétentes. Quant aux autres oeuvres d'art de nos Musées et monuments publics, il est souhaitable qu'elles ne soient déplacées qu'après un examen rigoureux de leur état, et seulement en vue d'un intérêt sérieux, spécifié pour chaque oeuvre dont le prêt est demandé."

It will be observed that, while both in France and in Belgium emphasis is laid on particular disadvantages and risks, and the need for most careful regulation, it is not proposed to prohibit international loans if the occasion justifies it. As regards the question of risk in general, a careful scrutiny of the evidence as a whole, printed in the volumes accompanying our Reports,

¹ Following this Report, the President of the French Republic issued the following decree :

" Art. 1^{er}.—Toute oeuvre faisant partie des collections des musées nationaux ne pourra être prêtée pour les expositions particulières organisées en France et à l'étranger.

Art. 2.—Le ministre de l'instruction publique et des beaux-arts se réserve la faculté, après avis du comité consultatif des musées nationaux, de décider du prêt d'oeuvres pour les expositions officielles organisées par le Gouvernement.

Art. 3.—Le ministre de l'instruction publique et des beaux-arts est chargé de l'exécution du présent décret, qui sera publié au *Journal officiel* et inséré au Bulletin des lois et aura son effet à compter du 1^{er} mai 1928.

Fait à Paris, le 13 mai 1928. GASTON DOUMERGUE.

Par le Président de la République.

Le ministre de l'instruction publique et des beaux-arts.—EDOUARD HERRIOT."

indicates that the actual damage suffered by works of art on loan is, in fact, almost negligible. Improved methods of conveyance, shorter time occupied in transit and greater experience in packing have reduced the risks to a minimum. Works of art are continually travelling from one end of the world to another. A practical test of the degree of risk is the low insurance premium. In the case of the Dutch Exhibition the exhibits were insured, we understand, for some £2,500,000. Masterpieces were assembled from all over Europe. Not a single claim was made, we believe, upon the underwriters.

In view of all the circumstances it seems to us that the time has come when a positive move should be made by this country in the matter of international loans either for exceptional centenary or other special exhibitions, or for purposes of reciprocal loans. The desirability of such loans under proper safeguards is especially apparent in the case of the British School of Painting; but we think that any necessary legislation should not be too narrowly drawn so as to confine loans overseas to one category of objects.

Overseas Loans: the Present Legislative Position.

19. As far as we are aware, no new statutory authority is required by the following National Institutions to enable them to lend overseas :—

- (i) The Victoria and Albert Museum.⁽¹⁾
- (ii) The Science Museum.⁽¹⁾
- (iii) The London Museum.⁽²⁾
- (iv) The Imperial War Museum.⁽³⁾
- (v) The National Portrait Gallery.⁽⁴⁾
- (vi) The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.⁽⁵⁾
- (vii) The Geological Survey and Museum.⁽⁶⁾
- (viii) The Royal Scottish Museum.⁽⁷⁾
- (ix) and (x) The National Galleries of Scotland.⁽⁸⁾
- (xi) The National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland.⁽⁹⁾
- (xii) The National Library of Scotland.⁽¹⁰⁾

Though the above Institutions have power to lend abroad, we gather from a review of the evidence that this power has not often been exercised, except in the case of the Royal Botanic

¹ Memo. of the Board of Education, p. 333 Vol. Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² Memo., p. 237(3), ditto.

³ Memo., p. 236(2), ditto. Subject to the consent of the Treasury.

⁴ Memo., p. 204(3), Vol. Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

⁵ Memo., p. 6, para. (3), ditto.

⁶ Memo., p. 19(2), ditto.

⁷ Memo., p. 86(3), ditto.

⁸ Memo., p. 238(2) and (3), ditto. Also Q. 3956.

⁹ Memo., p. 241(3), ditto.

¹⁰ National Library of Scotland Act, 1925, Section 2 (e). Subject to Treasury sanction.

Gardens, Kew, where the power to lend or interchange specimens is regarded as one of the most useful activities in the Herbarium.⁽¹⁾ In the case of works of art, the only recent instance of loan abroad appears to have been the loan of a number of pictures from the Imperial War Museum last year for the purposes of a special exhibition in Buenos Aires.⁽²⁾

On the other hand, we understand that statutory provision would be required to enable (i) the Trustees of the British Museum including the Natural History Museum, and (ii) the Trustees of the National Gallery, including the Tate Gallery, to lend overseas.⁽³⁾

From the above brief statement of those Institutions which can at the present time lend abroad without requiring further statutory authority, and of those which cannot unless specific statutory authority is accorded, it will be seen at a glance how anomalous the present position is. We think that this anomalous position ought now to be brought to an end by a short Act of Parliament which would empower the Trustees of the British Museum, including the Museum of Natural History, and the Trustees of the National Gallery, including the Tate Gallery, to make loans overseas under such precise and proper safeguards as may be determined by the authorities of each Institution. We do not think that the Act itself should attempt to define the class of objects which should be excluded from the purview of the Act, e.g., fragile objects, panel pictures, unique or type specimens, as we think that such definition can be accomplished better by regulations promulgated and, if need be, modified from time to time by the governing authorities. The object to be aimed at is that all the National Institutions named above should at least have the same general powers of loan overseas, though the extent to which these are exercised must necessarily vary with the circumstances of each Institution. We are of the opinion that the contemplated legislation should be strictly confined to loans and should not deal with exchanges, by which we mean permanent exchanges. We are aware that a number of the institutions already possess certain powers of exchange,⁽⁴⁾ and we do not wish here to propose any alteration of these powers. Any proposal involving either an extension or limitation of the power of exchange would require careful consideration by the proposed Standing Commission whose creation we have advocated. The permanent exchange of objects raises

¹ Memo., p. 6, para. 3, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² Q. 4345-4349.

³ As regards the position of the British Museum, see memo., p. 30, p. 53(4) and Q. 711.

As regards the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery see memo., p. 162, para. 2(b) and para. 3, p. 112, para. 3, and Q. 1763.

⁴ e.g. the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. See p. 52, para. 2(1), and 333(2), Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

controversial questions and might involve needless friction, especially where the exchange of objects of art is concerned.⁽¹⁾

In our considered opinion there is no danger whatever that a brief Act of Parliament, according powers of loan overseas on the lines indicated above, would lead to a rash or harmful dispersal of the national treasures. Any suggestion to this effect must fall at once to the ground in face of the fact that a large number of the Institutions already possess these powers, but use them with an excess of caution approaching total paralysis.

Unfortunate Consequences of the Present Position.

20. The consequences of the present position are, in our judgment, most unfortunate:—

(1) A nation which welcomes great international exhibitions in its capital city, and fails to reciprocate, cannot escape from the charge of churlishness.

(2) It is indubitable that British Art is too little known and appreciated on the Continent. We have ourselves been impressed by the lamentable inadequacy of its representation in the great galleries of Europe. At the present time, the inspired achievements of the British School of Painting are actually little known outside this country and the United States of America. Anyone solicitous of our national reputation cannot but be concerned on visiting the great foreign Galleries where British art is supposed to be represented, but is in truth travestied by bad examples and false ascriptions.⁽²⁾

(3) Under present conditions, there is no system of reciprocal loans between this country, the Dominions and Colonies and the Indian Empire, and the advantages which might arise from the Imperial connexion are neglected.⁽³⁾

¹ The point has been well put by Sir Charles Holmes: "I think that the exchange should always be in the form of exchange of loans. That does give both parties, I think, a very desirable elasticity, and . . . it has the great international advantage of silencing many recriminations, because what would always happen would be that, supposing you exchanged a Turner for a Goya, in Spain a certain number of people would say, "Why have we the Turner and not the Goya?" People here might say, "Why have we that inferior Goya instead of the beautiful Turner?" But if it were merely exchange of loans, the risk of international friction would be greatly diminished." Q. 2304.

² At one well-known continental gallery British Art of the 18th century is represented by pictures scarcely any of which would be acceptable at the National Gallery or the Tate Gallery, Gainsborough being represented by an example of still life. Many of the other pictures of the British school are copies or imitations. At another well-known gallery there is only one picture representing British Art—a doubtful Hoppner.

³ From this statement we of course except the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, whose work is mainly devoted to Imperial and economic interests and research.

Benefits to be derived from Overseas Loans.

21. We are satisfied that, if the change which we advocate were accomplished, the benefits would be very great :—

(1) We cannot doubt that loan exhibitions, particularly of the British School of Painting, held from time to time in the capital cities of Europe would come as a revelation to our neighbours, would exercise a profound influence on the spirit of creative art, and would promote international friendship.

(2) The information, now for the first time collected, as to the numerous Museums and Galleries in the Dominions and Colonies and in the Empire of India, printed in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report, indicates what reciprocal advantages might ensue from a system of interchange of loans. It is not a question simply of the National Institutions having it in their power to confer great benefits on our fellow citizens in different parts of the Empire,⁽¹⁾ but they would themselves benefit from the interchange of loans and from an interchange of ideas.⁽²⁾ It is noteworthy that individual enterprise has already, as in so many other instances, indicated the path which the State should pursue. Under the National Art-Collections Fund a National Loan Collection Trust has been constituted with the object of forming a collection of pictures available for loan, not only to Provincial Galleries throughout the country, but throughout the British Empire. The nucleus of this collection, which includes representatives of the Dutch, Flemish and British Schools, is a number of Old Masters presented by Mr. William Harvey of Leeds. The pictures comprised in this collection are now on their way to five cities in Canada, and an application has, we understand, recently been received from South Africa.

¹ The following passage occurs in a report made by the President of the Board of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia to the South Australian Government early in 1928, on his return from a visit to the United Kingdom : " It was impossible not to be struck by the wasteful holding of art treasures in the mass When one considers the value to our collection of one or two typical examples of each master, one wonders whether the authorities could somehow be induced to make, out of their wealth, a gift that could not possibly be missed." In the memorandum which has been furnished by the Government of Victoria, Australia, it is stated that " from a Dominions point of view it would be very advantageous if a scheme could be evolved whereby the heads of the various museums and Galleries in London would help the Overseas Institutions to build up their collections by referring to them works of art worthy of acquisition offered for sale, but not required, in England. It would be many years before the authorities here will be able to provide a staff capable of coping with this work, and it would be very helpful if they were able to obtain such assistance from time to time." See Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

² The Council of the Asiatic Society of Bengal observes, " The Council holds the view that under necessary guarantees of safety and practicability loans and exchanges between collections of Great Britain and India constitute an unavoidable and desirable necessity of modern intellectual intercourse and co-operation."

See also especially the Memo. from the National Gallery of Canada.

We do not doubt that, if this proposal for the development of a system of reciprocal loans is carried into effect, the various parts of the Empire concerned will be ready to share any financial costs—we do not think they would be large—which might be incurred.

The Question of Congestion and Improved Exhibition.

22. In paragraph 4 of our Terms of Reference we have been asked to enquire to what extent there is congestion in the National Museums and Galleries, and to report, if such congestion exists, how it can best be relieved. Our Interim Report has already called attention to the most conspicuous and urgent cases of congestion and has indicated the remedy in those instances, namely extensions to, or modifications of, existing buildings. Our recommendations have since been accepted. In the second part of our Report we shall deal with further accommodation needs in the case of certain of the Institutions considered separately. In this part of our Report we are concerned with general aspects of the problem.

In the first place, it is necessary to realise that congestion is the danger of all Museums and Galleries, not only in this country, but all over the world. It is conspicuous in certain of the long-established museums on the continent of Europe, nor is it absent from some of the great Institutions in the United States of America, notably the Metropolitan Museum of New York.⁽¹⁾ The case is not better in the Provincial Museums and Galleries in this country. On this subject, we would call attention to the remarks in the careful memorandum submitted to us by the Municipal Corporations Association, and we unhesitatingly endorse their observations on sale, which is named in our Terms of Reference as a possible solution of congestion.⁽²⁾

¹ Evidence of Mr. Edward Robinson, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Q. 26-31.

² "The problem of congestion which confronts the national galleries equally confronts the provincial galleries. It is generally felt, however, that the sale of "gifts and bequests of slight importance or in excess of requirements" is open to very serious objection. There can be no clear dividing line as to those gifts or bequests which are of such importance as to justify retention and those of only slight importance. What by one generation may be regarded as of slight importance may by the next generation be regarded as of very considerable importance. A further difficulty arises in stamping works as of secondary importance, for the very fact that the articles are offered for sale would tend to depreciate their market value. It is feared, therefore, that the sale of such works would, by reason of their depreciation, not fetch any considerable sum in the open market. But the main objection to granting the national galleries the power of sale is the fear that there would be created in the minds of intending donors an uncertainty which would tend to check their generosity. An intending donor is willing to give works to the national galleries feeling that they will not be disposed of. Hence it is suggested that any such alteration as might be proposed for the sale of works in order to reduce the congestion in the State galleries should be most carefully considered in the light of its possible effect on intending donors." Memo. of Municipal Corporations Association, page 276, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

While it is clear that there can be no short cut in the case of a problem of this kind, we believe that there are certain general factors, the recognition of which would at least make its ultimate solution easier.

(1) *Need for clearer definition of policy.*

We have already called attention in paragraph 9 to the need for a clearer definition of objective in the case of each Institution, and we desire here to emphasise its importance from the particular aspect of congestion. Great Institutions whose purpose is to increase and to illuminate man's knowledge of himself and of the world of nature cannot cease to grow. But the rate of useful growth will depend on the primary object of each Institution and on the extent to which that primary object is constantly borne in mind. The policy of each Institution has hitherto been a matter of casual consideration from time to time, each authority acting in isolation. If the measures of central co-ordination and of co-operation between the National Institutions themselves, as well as between the National Institutions and the Provincial Institutions, which we have already recommended, are carried into effect, development should be better regulated, inevitable growth brought into harmony with true national needs, and the danger of mere accumulation and hoarding diminished. In particular, we attach great importance to a wise use of the power of loan.

(2) *Distinction between the needs of the student and the needs of the general public.*

The principle of differentiating the needs of the public on the one hand and of the student on the other, has been preached for a great many years. It was notably emphasised by an eminent Museum director, Sir William Flower, in an address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, delivered 30 years ago. "A crowded gallery," he said, "except in some very exceptional circumstances, at once condemns the curator, as the remedy is generally in his own hands. In order to avoid it he has nothing to do but sternly to eliminate all the less important specimens. If any of these possess features of historic or scientific interest demanding their permanent preservation, they should be kept in the reserve collections; otherwise, they should not be kept at all."¹ It is true that the remedy of congestion is not quite so simple as Sir William Flower suggests, because the great Museums and Galleries have in many cases been built with little regard to the separate needs of the public and of the student. But the essential importance of the principle of distinction is now everywhere recognised and all the most important witnesses who have given evidence before us have emphasised it. This unanimity of view is not confined to this country: it is held equally abroad. "Museums

¹ "Essays on Museums" p. 19 by Sir William Flower, K.C.B., F.R.S.

and galleries," says Professor Venturi, "should serve to elevate the taste and artistic sentiment of the public, and therefore to the public should be presented only the very greatest things, the most elect productions of art, the very flower of artistic works, the creations of genius. All the rest should be given to the students, to the researchers and the historians of art, in separate buildings, which one enters to study as one enters archives. It is necessary to make this division; if we do not, we shall neglect, for the sake of a few studious people, the great aim of all Museums, that of educating."⁽¹⁾ "The feeble point of your Galleries," says Dr. Schmidt Degener, "is their extreme overcrowding. The first duty of museum authorities is to protect the sound and simple mind of the general public and not to bewilder the larger part of the visitors in throwing before them *pêle môle* every kind of impression and every degree of quality Your strong points are your acquisitions, these being nearly always things of high quality. Your weak points are selection and display Give the works of art leave to be eloquent in their own way and they will be understood by large numbers; this will be more effective than any guide or any lecturing or preaching. Your strongest point is your British public. They have in face of the exhibits a reverence one seldom meets on the Continent. They are ready not to study things, but to enjoy them."⁽²⁾

The distinction between the needs of the public and the needs of the student is quite as important in Museums of Science as in Museums of Art. Sir Arthur Keith, giving evidence before us with particular reference to the Natural History Museum, said: "If you ask me which is the main function of the Museum, I should say for science; the proper registration and collection of materials is the most important function for the growth of knowledge, but the public must get something out of it, its share comes out of it naturally. I take it that the people who have to arrange and study the specimens have as a first duty to show the public the best that they have at their disposal."⁽³⁾ "My experience," says Professor Graham Kerr, "is that a single specimen on a shelf attracts to itself the interest of every passer by, while a similar shelf with 50 specimens in a row is passed by unheeded. Consequently I think that museums would make themselves more efficient as instruments of public instruction by greatly diminishing the number of their exhibited specimens."

Concentrated Effort necessary with a View to Relief of Congestion and to Improved Exhibition.

23. In our view the authorities of each of the National Institutions should devote their energies to a far greater extent than

¹ Letter from Professor Venturi to Lord D'Abernon, page 306, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² Letter from Dr. Schmidt Degener to Lord D'Abernon, printed in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

³ Q. 1673.

they have hitherto done, to remedying a disease which is universally acknowledged. We endorse the opinion that "we have to reckon, not only with exhibition fatigue, but with exhibition terror."⁽¹⁾ Under present conditions, the public is dismayed by multiplicity, while the student is hampered by the attempt to reconcile his own needs with those of the public. Briefly, the principle should be to exhibit less, and to reserve more in such a way as to facilitate the work of students. In only one great Museum, the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff, has the building been definitely designed from the outset with this principle in view. In its spacious central hall are small cases, two to each department, which greet the visitor as he makes his way to the department. Each of these cases contains four single panel exhibits illustrating some general aspect of the subject. The publicly exhibited collection of each department contains almost exclusively selected exhibits. Adjoining each public gallery are the offices, workrooms and systematic collections of the department accessible to the student or enquirer. In the basement are the reserve collections only needed for special purposes. Such an arrangement has been facilitated at Cardiff, not only because the building was designed for it, but also because the collections relate almost wholly to Wales and are still relatively small in comparison with the size of the buildings. Nevertheless all who are interested in modern ideas of museum arrangement should see what has been done at Cardiff. The plan of parallel collections on the lines of that just described has been developed in America, notably at the Boston Museum.

In the paragraphs which follow we submit various suggestions for the relief of congestion and for the improvement of exhibition. But the suggestions made are by no means exhaustive. Nor do we think it desirable to prescribe in too precise terms remedies which only the authorities themselves can work out in detail, in close collaboration, where necessary, with the Office of Works.

Various Methods of Relieving Congestion.

24. While in not a few instances the only remedy for congestion may be additional accommodation, we think that in various departments of the National Museums and Galleries great improvements could be effected by a better use of existing space.

(1) *Loans.*

An incidental advantage of the policy of judicious lending which we had occasion to suggest in another connexion, would be the relief it might afford to congestion. A reduction in the number of actual exhibits would naturally be accompanied by a rise in their average quality, with the result that the attractiveness of the collections would be correspondingly enhanced.

¹ Memorandum of Mr. C. Marriott, the art critic, published in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

(2) *Conversion of certain galleries into reserve rooms.*

We think that at the British Museum, including the Natural History Museum, and at the Victoria and Albert Museum it should be possible to convert certain galleries into reserve rooms so as to allow the main collections to be more widely spaced. At the British Museum some portion of the Coptic, Phoenician, Semitic and Hittite series of rooms might be converted into reserve rooms for the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities. Already in that Department great improvements have recently been effected by the elimination of superfluous objects, and what is possible in that Department should be possible in others, notably in the congested central saloon of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities. It should also be possible to convert one or more whole courts or galleries of the Victoria and Albert Museum into reserve rooms. That Museum has hitherto been distinguished among London Museums for the beauty of its exhibition. But, in spite of the vast extent of its public galleries, and of the fact that the new building was opened only 20 years ago, congestion in various departments is becoming manifest, for instance, in the Departments of Ceramics, Textiles and Metal-work. The whole of the extensive lower-ground floor of the Victoria and Albert Museum, at present used for the exhibition of sculpture and furniture, is far more appropriate for reserve than for main exhibits, since it was not designed for exhibition purposes. Nor is this the only space in that Museum which the authorities might, with profit both to the Public and the Student, set aside for reserve collections.

The recommendations, made in our Interim Report, regarding the transference of the Newspaper Department to Hendon should afford the authorities of the British Museum at Bloomsbury a large extent of useful space in the semi-basement of the King Edward VII Galleries for study and storage rooms for various departments. In the case of the Natural History Museum, we have already recommended in that Report the conversion of one, if not two, of the present Fossil exhibition galleries into storage space for reserve collections.

(3) *Reservation of portions of a gallery.*

In certain cases, where the architectural features permit, it should be possible to reserve one part of the room for study collections, the other part being devoted to selected exhibits. This experiment has been tried with success in one of the Greek Vase Galleries at the British Museum, and we think that the plan, which is susceptible of many modifications, might be tried elsewhere, not only in the British Museum, but in other Institutions where congestion is conspicuous.

(4) *New Cases.*

In the case of small exhibits the most economical and most convenient way of relieving the congestion in the exhibition

cases is to remove a large number of objects to unlocked drawers under the cases. This method has been adopted in certain departments of the British Museum, of the Natural History Museum, of the Victoria and Albert Museum and other Museums. It is capable of great extension in all the Museums. It would frequently involve the construction of entirely new cases, but we think that this should be taken in hand and carried out with all convenient speed.

Various Methods of Improving Exhibition.

25. In the first place it is essential to remember that the majority of the visitors to the National Museums and Galleries are the general uninstructed public. Moreover, however learned a particular visitor may be in one subject, he is generally uninstructed in many other subjects with which the exhibited collections deal. It is therefore necessary to set out the exhibited collections for the enlightenment of the general public. The most noteworthy objects should be made more conspicuous and should be mentioned in a cheap general guide. There should be a larger number of introductory and illustrative series. In the Natural History Museum the central hall is entirely occupied by exhibits of this character, but the principle is capable of great extension, not only in that Museum, but in all. An introductory or illustrative exhibit may range from a single illustrative case, such as that dealing with the development of hand tools at the Science Museum, to a whole room, such as that dealing with Greek and Roman life at the British Museum, or the book production room at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The air of stagnation which too often prevails, not only in Museums, but in Picture Galleries, can be corrected by periodical changes in the exhibits;⁽¹⁾ by temporary exhibitions; by setting aside a space for, and calling particular attention to, recent acquisitions, which should, as far as possible, be exhibited separately for a time before they take their permanent and destined place; by the better display and lighting of exhibits in many of the overcrowded galleries and rooms. It is lamentable that artificial lighting should still be lacking in the National Gallery and in the Tate Gallery. It should be introduced immediately. In general, much greater attention should be paid to better artificial illumination. For example, in the Nimroud and Assyrian Galleries at the British Museum the reflection gravely interferes with the visibility of the works of art. Numerous devices can now be adopted to improve lighting, and these should be the subject of active experiment. In many instances veiled electric light could be introduced into the cases with great advantage. This has been done in some of the cases in the Ceramic Collection at the British Museum. That simple

¹ A collection re-hung is almost a new collection. Re-hanging and re-arrangement of permanent collections are essential to their vitality and to the interest of the public.

redcoration can do much to improve natural lighting has been demonstrated by various experiments carried out by the Office of Works in the Victoria and Albert Museum and in the National Gallery.⁽¹⁾ In Picture Galleries the cabinet system—so prevalent on the Continent—is a matter of controversy, but, in any addition to the Galleries, space might be provided for one or two small rooms where some particular masterpiece, changed from time to time, could be seen individually by those who are distracted by long lines of pictures. The buttress and recess gallery, now the subject of experiment at the National Gallery, may provide a satisfactory compromise between the interminable wall and the cabinet system. Many of the present unworthy frames should be replaced.⁽²⁾ All pictures, and indeed all objects, should be so exhibited that they can be conveniently seen without stooping. Much more attention might be paid to vistas, not only in the Picture Galleries, but in the Museums: the exhibition of sculpture would specially benefit by them. In all Museums and Galleries clear plans should be placed conspicuously in the entrance hall and at all central and pivotal points.⁽³⁾ It is probable that many visitors to the British Museum miss the King Edward VII Galleries altogether for want of guidance. There are numerous other instances in the National Museums and Galleries where exhibits are difficult to find for lack of a map indicating quite clearly where the visitor is standing and how he is to find his way to other parts of the building. More liberal use should be made, wherever possible, of maps and models illustrating archaeological discoveries and of other exhibits, whether of art or science, which have relation to particular regions. Except at the Science Museum there are far too few group labels, i.e., descriptive labels explaining the contents of a room or case. Such labels contain information of the highest importance to the ordinary visitor, especially if he does not possess the detailed guide books. Nor can such information be included in the cheap general guide. It should go without saying that each exhibited object should be accompanied by a label—approximately dated, if possible—except in those rare instances where a whole group can be adequately described by a single label. Unfortunately it sometimes happens, even in the National Museums, that important objects are exhibited without any label at all. Where it is not already done, we think it important that it should be made clear to the ordinary visitor which are reproductions or restorations as distinct from originals.

¹ A new method of securing uniform diffused daylight is to be found in the use of cubical white lined cells forming a ceiling in the Zoological Museum of the University of Glasgow.

² "We have still many frames which are not creditable to the Gallery, and I wish we could have funds or gifts enabling us to substitute a better class of frames for many of those which unfortunately we have to tolerate. A great deal can be done in that direction still." Evidence of Lord Crawford. Q. 1801.

³ Admirably designed plans are to be found in the entrance halls of the new Science Museum and of the Royal Scottish Museum.

Improved Utilization of the Resources of the National Museums and Galleries.

26. The attendances of the public and of students at the National Museums and Galleries in London (excluding Kew) and Edinburgh have increased from 5,025,000 in 1913 to 6,463,000 in 1928.⁽¹⁾ Though the utility of a Museum cannot really be measured by numbers the increase is quite inadequate, and, apart from the disturbing factor of fees,⁽²⁾ with which we deal separately, we think that the increase in the utilisation of the National Institutions could be made very much greater by improved methods of contact with the public. We have already expressed the opinion in our Interim Report that in present circumstances it is difficult to feel, from the standpoint either of material or of spiritual values, that the immense capital represented by the National Collections is bringing in an adequate return. It is clearly in the interests of national efficiency that the facilities available should be utilised as widely as possible, and we make the following practical recommendations with that end in view.

(1) *Publicity.*

We are of opinion that our National Museums and Galleries would increase alike in public utility and public esteem if they could enjoy a greater and better organised measure of publicity. We believe that in many cases the contact between the National Institutions and the Press is capable of great improvement and that, at present, a great deal of valuable publicity is lost by a want of method and technical skill in the sending out of information.⁽³⁾ Information suitable for publication, with photographic illustrations, should be supplied some days before publication and a definite release date should be clearly indicated. As it is, important acquisitions are often printed as a mere list or not printed at all. It has further been suggested that all communications to the newspapers should be sent out in duplicate so that the editor may have an opportunity of sending a copy to the Art or Science Correspondent chiefly interested. If more time and opportunity were afforded to the Press through their Special Correspondents, the information supplied would no doubt be sub-edited, and a much wider publicity secured.⁽⁴⁾ Far more attention should be paid by the Authorities to the annual reports of the Institutions, at present too often distin-

¹ See the table of attendances printed in Appendix II accompanying this Report.

² Fees are charged at the National Gallery, Tate Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Wallace Collection, London Museum, Kew Gardens, National Gallery of Scotland.

³ Q. 3769: evidence of Mr. F. Rutter. See also the remarks on Publicity in general in the memo. submitted by the Design and Industries Association, page 266(17), Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

⁴ See Memorandum of Mr. C. Marriott published with the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

guished for their repellent aridity. Moreover, these reports are not infrequently published too late.

As regards Advertisements and Posters, the difficulty hitherto has been mainly financial. At the same time, various enterprises find it an advantage to undertake certain forms of poster publicity on behalf of the Museums and Galleries: the excellent series of posters which have lately appeared on the Underground Railways with a view to encouraging traffic is a case in point. There would seem to be no reason why posters of artistic design should not be used by the Institutions themselves. The decorative poster has done much to reconcile the conflicting claims of advertisement and art, and there could be no more appropriate patrons of decorative artists than the great Museums and Galleries. In the case of such forms of advertisement, expenditure will be necessary. We understand that the British Museum have been authorised to spend a small sum on advertising their beautiful series of cards in appropriate publications and that this form of publicity has led to a considerable increase in sales. We think that other National Museums and Galleries should have similar authority to spend a little money on advertisement for similar purposes, and for the payment of artists who design suitable posters. We are convinced that such expenditure, which need not be large, will meet with an ample return, not only educationally because a greater number of people will visit the National Institutions,⁽¹⁾ but commercially because there will be a greater sale for the more popular forms of publication.

(2) *Publications.*

The publications issued by the National Museums and Galleries form one of the most important sides of their activities from the standpoint of contact with the public. They may be roughly divided into two groups:—

(a) General guides and catalogues, brief explanatory monographs, postcards and photographs, all of which are designed to reach a wide public;

(b) The fuller and more scientific catalogues and longer monographs that may briefly be termed the learned publications:—

(i) There is a good deal of diversity in the manner in which publications are issued. Under long-standing arrangements the British Museum (and Natural History Museum) and the National Gallery produce their publications independently of the Stationery Office. The National Gallery publications are financed from funds originally provided out of a private bequest. The publications of all the other Institutions were

¹ In many American Museums concerts and organ recitals are given as a method of attracting the public. Evening concerts have also been given with success at the London Museum. The National Museum of Wales affords the public an opportunity for hearing good music in the middle of the day. These experiments might well be pursued in other institutions.

formerly printed and issued only by the Stationery Office. In 1922, however, the Treasury decided that each Museum and Gallery should arrange for its own printing and publishing, so far as concerned illustrated guides, postcards and other reproductions, and that either the Stationery Office or an outside firm of printers might be employed at the option of the Institution. This arrangement was designed to stimulate the interest of the Institutions in this important and profitable side of their activities. As a further step they were allowed to reap the benefit of any profits on sales (averaged over $2\frac{1}{2}$ years) as an addition to their grant-in-aid. We understand that these arrangements have proved a success. The scheme as outlined above does not appear to have been extended to the Scottish Institutions and we think that this step should now be taken.

(ii) On the recommendation of the Select Committee on Estimates in 1927, the financial aspect of the publications was reviewed to ensure that everything was being done to enable them to be conducted on a remunerative basis. Each Institution now furnishes the Treasury with an annual trading account, showing the total transactions, the variations in stocks and overhead costs incurred. As a result of the efforts which have been made, profits have tended to increase and losses, where incurred, are diminishing.

(iii) We sympathise with the desire to place the sale of these publications on a profitable basis, and also with any scheme for giving the Institutions the benefit of profits earned. But the distinction between the popular and the learned publications is fundamental in this connexion. While every increase in the sale of the publications has an educational value which in our view is even more important than the purely commercial value, great though that is, there are publications of the highest interest, e.g. the detailed catalogues and scientific monographs of various kinds, which can never be expected to make a commercial profit.⁽¹⁾ They can

⁽¹⁾ "It is part of the Museum policy and business to issue monographs and catalogues. We have a high reputation for them, and we want to carry on, although they have not a profitable sale. No expensive scientific work has a profitable sale." Q. 685. Evidence of Mr. C. Tate Regan. "The catalogues as a whole are not financially remunerative . . . Whether financially profitable or not, however, they are essential. The first duty of a museum is to catalogue its contents; otherwise their utility is, at the least, greatly diminished. Every self-respecting museum of any importance should have a catalogue in order that students may be aware of its contents. The catalogues of the British Museum are part of its contribution to learning and education, and their production is a plain duty." Memorandum submitted by Sir F. Kenyon on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum, p. 59, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

only have a limited sale; but their influence on the public is not less beneficial because it is indirect, and their issue ought not to be curtailed because they are unlikely to yield a profit. The cost of publication is in this case part of the cost of the research itself, and should be provided for on Parliamentary votes as generously as circumstances permit.

(iv) Every effort should be made to stimulate sales of publications having a wide and popular appeal. Experience shows that they can be sold cheaply, and yet with a satisfactory margin of profit, and the growth of public interest in art and science and the increasing knowledge and appreciation of the national treasures should result in a substantial augmentation of this revenue. The Institutions should have as free a hand as possible to utilise this profit, but it should be used in the first place to develop the publications business itself. We understand that this was the original intention when the 1922 arrangement was introduced. Trading accounts afford a valuable indication of the general interest in and appreciation of the National Collections, and should be studied carefully by those responsible for promoting contact between the institutions and the public.

(v) We think that there is a considerable potential market for publications and reproductions in this country, in the Dominions, in the United States and abroad generally. One stall in a large Museum or Gallery cannot make a sufficiently wide appeal. Such publications as the various pictorial reproductions of the British Museum and the illustrated booklets of the Victoria and Albert Museum could not fail to be popular and to have a wide sale at the very moderate price at which they are issued. Their educational value is indisputable, but they require to be brought before the notice of the public much more actively. The arrangements now made by the British Museum for sales through Agencies might be developed, and the practice adopted with good results by other Institutions.

(vi) Stalls for the sale of publications within the Museum should be made as prominent and attractive as possible. In this connexion, and in the general interest of developing the popular appeal of that great Institution, we think it essential that the second entrance to the British Museum at Bloomsbury, giving access to the King Edward VII galleries, should be opened to the public at the earliest possible moment. It may be hoped that the sale of publications at a stall at this entrance would go far to meet the cost.

involved by such extra staff as would be needed. We think also that a second bookstall should be opened at the Exhibition Road entrance to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

(vii) In general we consider that the series of guides and catalogues issued by the National Museums and Galleries are admirably and cheaply produced, and are an indispensable aid to the proper understanding of the national treasures. We desire, however, to make the following suggestions:—

(a) We observe that, while the larger London Museums and the Scottish Museums and Galleries each publish a short popular guide at the price of 3d. or 6d., no such popular guide at the same price appears to be available in respect of the great national collections of pictures in London—the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, the Wallace Collection. We think that a short cheap guide in the case of each of the Picture Galleries, drawing attention to the main masterpieces, would be most useful and would have the same wide sales as are enjoyed by the cheap Museum guides. We do not, of course, suggest that these cheap guides should be substituted for the longer and excellently illustrated guides which are already on sale at the Institutions at prices of 1s. 6d. or 2s.; they would be supplementary and meet a different demand.

(b) It would be of great assistance, not only to those more especially interested in the Museums and Galleries in London, but even more to visitors from the Provinces or from abroad who come to see the National Institutions in such large numbers, if some combined publication could be issued containing in compendious form, the principal facts of public interest connected with each, their situation and how to find them. We have in mind something on the lines of the *Annuaire des Musées Nationaux*, published at Paris under the auspices of the Conseil des Musées Nationaux. Such a publication should be widely circulated both for sale and for advertisement.

(3) *Photographs.*

That photographs should be plentiful, cheap and clear, is a prime necessity which the governing authorities of the National Museums and Galleries should continually bear in mind. It is, perhaps, a counsel of perfection to suggest that every object of art which has been thought to be worthy of acquisition by one of

the National Institutions ought to be photographed. The vast extent of the possessions at the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum makes this ideal unattainable, but at least new acquisitions ought to be photographed as they are made. Lantern slides should also be obtainable on purchase and loan. We realise that the great importance of more and better photographs has for some time been appreciated, but the progress made by the individual Institutions in this respect has been unequal, and it is significant that only since 1927 has authority been granted to the British Museum to employ its own photographic staff. At the Victoria and Albert Museum the photographs are kept in books which are displayed on a counter contiguous to the main book stall; copies are not made for stock, but to order as required and are charged in accordance with the price list.⁽¹⁾ We think that a counter for the sale of photographs similar to that in the Victoria and Albert Museum would be a great convenience to the public if it could be established in other Museums, particularly in the British Museum. It would be more effective if, as in the case of the National Gallery, a large stock of photographs of important objects were available for immediate purchase at all the Museums. Experience of the recent Dutch Exhibition shows that people will buy photographs if immediately available, but will not leave orders for future delivery.

A number of important foreign Museums issue at regular intervals publications containing reproductions of their new acquisitions. The British Museum Quarterly, the Natural History Magazine, and the Annual Review of Principal Acquisitions published by the Victoria and Albert Museum are excellent of their kind, but it would be well if the objects depicted were more numerous, the plates printed only on one side of the paper, and the intervals between publications shorter.

(4) *Reproductions and Casts.*

The present situation as regards the production of casts both large and small has been indicated to us in the memorandum submitted by the Trustees of the British Museum and in the memorandum by the Board of Education. The recommendations we have to make under this head can more appropriately be included in Part II of this Report.

(5) *Lectures and Lecture Halls.*

The system of Guide Lecturers in the National Museums and Galleries, which owed its origin largely to the efforts of Lord Sudeley, is generally admitted to be of the greatest possible utility in the work of popularising the National Museums and

¹ Board of Education memorandum, page 337(8) Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report. In addition to the photographs for sale the Art Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum contains a collection of approximately 250,000 photographs of architecture, sculpture, paintings and other objects of art, together with photographs of animals, plants, etc. which provide material for the use of designers and others.

Galleries. The programme of official lectures in the National Institutions is now well organised as will be seen from the monthly printed list of Lectures and Special Exhibitions in the London Museums and Galleries. The only observations which we would wish to make on this subject are as follows :—

(i) We think that the present status of the Guide Lecturers might be reviewed with the object if possible of making them part of the permanent organisation of the Museums and Galleries, and consequentially of requiring a higher standard of qualification for appointment.⁽¹⁾

(ii) The success of the system is largely contingent, we understand, on the groups of listeners not being too large. In other words, if the lectures become too popular with one section of the public, other sections of the public, who prefer individual and quiet study, will find themselves inconvenienced. If the system should considerably develop, it will probably be necessary to concentrate on particular hours of the day, especially the lunch-time interval.

(iii) We commend to the consideration of the Authorities the possible development of a system of Guide Attendants who would be paid by such members of the Public as desired their services, and who might be more readily available at short notice than the formal lecturer.⁽²⁾ It goes without saying that such payments should be made through the Institution and not to the individual Guide Attendant direct. An interesting experiment is being made at the Science Museum. At that Museum, the Attendants in charge of the Collections are specially recruited, and are men of technical training and experience.⁽³⁾ Members of the public frequently refer to these Attendants for information, and we understand that their services are much appreciated.

(iv) We think it essential that all the National Museums and Galleries should have lecture theatres equipped with adequate facilities for taking notes. At present the only great Museum which has an adequate lecture theatre is the Victoria and Albert Museum. The educational benefits to be derived from the National Institutions would be immensely increased if each of them had a lecture theatre available for special lectures either by eminent outside experts or by members of the staff.

(6) *Amenities for the Public.*

We think it most desirable that reasonable facilities for rest and refreshment should be readily available for visitors to the National Museums and Galleries. The open court and the

¹ See the remarks contained in the Sudeley Committee's memo. on the guide Lecture system, pp. 284—5 Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² See Qs. 3763—7 and Q. 4638 A.

³ Evidence of Sir Henry Lyons, Qs. 2135—6.

refreshment room at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the refreshment room at the Tate Gallery afford excellent examples of what may be done. The room at the Tate shows what can be accomplished by the application of artistic enterprise to a dingy semi-basement.⁽¹⁾

(7) *Evening openings.*

At present the only National Museums and Galleries in London and Edinburgh which are ever open in the evening—and then only on certain days⁽²⁾ till 9 p.m.—are those Institutions which come under the administration of the Departments of Education, namely, in London, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Bethnal Green Museum, and, in Edinburgh, the Royal Scottish Museum. The Science Museum, prior to 1914, was also open in the evenings on certain days in the week. From figures obtained from the Board of Education, we understand that expenditure in respect of evening opening in the case of the Victoria and Albert and Bethnal Green Museums over the period of one year from the 1st October, 1927, to the 30th September, 1928, was £1,691. This figure is inclusive of all costs whatsoever, i.e., staff, lighting, etc. The aggregate number of attendances between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Thursdays, Saturdays and Bank Holidays during the period in question was approximately 63,000. This figure does not include visitors who entered the Museums before 5 p.m. and remained until after that hour. These figures seem to us to indicate that the cost of evening openings is relatively small, and that the number of persons who already take advantage of such limited opportunities as are available is considerable. In the circumstances, we think that the experiment of evening opening on two days in the week should be tried at certain other of the greater Institutions in the first instance, namely the British Museum, including the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum, the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery—when artificial light has been supplied at those two Institutions—and the National Gallery of Scotland. We further suggest that, in London at least, the hour of closing should be altered from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. We understand that the Science Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Bethnal Green Museum were open until this hour on three days a week before the War. In this connexion, we were impressed by the remarks contained in the memorandum of the British Institute of Industrial Art,⁽³⁾ and by the evidence of the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum: "Before the

¹ The need for refreshment rooms has been stressed in the Memoranda of Mr. C. Marriott and Mr. P. G. Konody, printed in the Volume of evidence accompanying this Report.

² The Victoria and Albert Museum, on Thursdays, Saturdays and Bank Holidays. The Bethnal Green Museum, on Mondays, Thursdays and Bank Holidays. The Royal Scottish Museum, on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

³ Page 257 (3), Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.



War we were open until 10 o'clock on three nights, and I have always regarded 9 o'clock to be a mere stepping stone to 10 o'clock. I think it [9 o'clock] is a very bad hour to choose. In view of the normal meal habits in London, it means that many people cannot get in after their evening meal; and, as a matter of fact, we do not get many people coming in during the latter part of that time. When it was open till 10 o'clock we did.⁽¹⁾" We apprehend that the success of evening openings would depend very largely on the extent of publicity afforded them. As the Sudeley Committee have represented to us: "After years of early closing, it will be necessary to give wide publicity to any extension of the hours of opening such as the Committee plead for, in order that the public may be made fully aware of the change. . . . The Committee considers that all facilities which are specially provided for the benefit of the public should be announced as widely as possible. In this connexion, it may be recalled that when some years ago the National Gallery was opened till later than usual, public announcement of the fact was altogether inadequate, and the privilege was shortly afterwards withdrawn, it being concluded that the small attendance indicated an absence of public appreciation.⁽²⁾" It is also essential that any such experiment should be tried over a sufficiently long period, say two or three years.

We have also been impressed by the success of the evening lectures which have been so admirably organised at certain of the National Institutions by the Westminster Lecture Society.⁽³⁾ We trust that this movement in future may receive increasing encouragement. The needs of the business man, and now of the business woman, have never been sufficiently studied in this country. In America special evening classes, lectures and exhibitions are arranged for and by business men, with admirable indirect results from the point of view of the Museum in bringing around it an enthusiastic business public. It is this public which in course of time produces donors and benefactors.

In this connexion it is not irrelevant to suggest that some effort might with advantage be made to sow the seed at a still earlier stage. While there are, we are glad to observe, distinct signs of a growing tendency to utilise the Museums and Galleries for the instruction of pupils in Elementary Schools, we find little or no evidence of a similar tendency in the case of Secondary and Public Schools. Yet that is a field that might be most fruitful.

¹ Q. 2815.

² Page 285 (12) (13), Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report. Evening Openings have also been advocated by the British Institute of Adult Education, p. 256 (6); the Tutors' Association, p. 288 (2), and p. 289 (7); the National Art Collections Fund, p. 278 (13); the Design and Industries Association, p. 265 (14), ditto; and by the Royal Institute of British Architects, in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

³ Memo. submitted by the Westminster Lecture Society printed in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

(8) *A new Administrative Need.*

In the preceding paragraphs we have called attention to various aspects of the promotion of a greater contact between the public and the National Institutions than exists at present. Much has been achieved under present conditions, but we think that a great deal more might be achieved if the object of promoting contact with the public and the Press were made the duty of an individual member of the staff. In the case of the larger Institutions in London we think it would be desirable that a whole-time officer should be appointed for the purpose. The services of one such officer might suffice for the needs of two or more of the smaller Institutions. It would be the duty of this officer to assist the Director in improving the various contacts with the public which we have outlined in the preceding paragraphs. He would, in short, act as a liaison officer between the public and the officials, a large part of whose time is necessarily occupied with questions of scholarship and learning. The duties of this officer in the greater Institutions will vary with the administrative organisation of the Institution and with the changing needs of the public. It is indeed, because these needs change, and because change is of the essence of interest and of life, that it is, in our view, so important to make some definite administrative provision on the lines we have indicated.

Question of Fees.

27. Of the twenty Institutions named in our Terms of Reference fees are charged by the following seven:—

<i>Institution.</i>	<i>Days of the week on which charge is made.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>
		<i>s. d.</i>
1. National Gallery..	Thursdays and Fridays ...	0 6
2. Tate Gallery ...	Tuesdays and Wednesdays ..	0 6
3. National Portrait Gallery.	Thursdays and Fridays ...	0 6
4. Wallace Collection	Tuesdays and Fridays ...	0 6
5. London Museum .	{ Tuesdays	1 0
	{ Wednesdays and Thursdays ..	0 6
6. National Gallery, Scotland.	Thursdays and Fridays ...	0 6
	(except January).	
7. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.	{ Tuesdays and Fridays ...	0 6
	{ All other days	0 1 ⁽¹⁾

The total receipts in 1927, from the admission fees in the case of these Institutions, amounted to £11,232. Of this sum £6,712 was received in respect of admission to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, leaving a total of £4,520 in respect of the six other Institutions.⁽²⁾

¹ By a recent decision announced by the Minister of Agriculture in the House of Commons on July 22nd, the 1d. fee has now been abolished as from August 5th, 1929.

² See Appendix V, p. 60, Interim Report.

We are asked in our Terms of Reference whether, having regard to the financial condition of the country, it would be desirable to institute a more general system of admission fees. We have considered this question in all its aspects and we have reached the conclusion that any attempt to increase the number of paying days in the case of those Institutions where they are charged, or to impose them in the case of those Institutions where they do not at present exist, would not in any circumstances be justified. The weight of opinion against fees, as voiced by representative outside bodies as well as by the National Institutions themselves, is overwhelming. The disastrous effect they have on attendances cannot be questioned. The experience of the Victoria and Albert Museum is particularly striking because the statistical records in that case are exceptionally complete, and it is possible to see the effect of the two systems in recent contrast. We understand that before the War the Museum was open free on three week-days (Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays) and on Sunday afternoons. The other three week-days were called "students' days" and fees were charged. From the 1st July, 1914, the Museum was open free on every day. The effect of fees and of the absence of fees on attendances may be seen at a glance from the following table⁽¹⁾ :—

Calendar Year.	Free days (Mondays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sunday afternoons).	Students' days (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays).	Total.	Admission Fees.
1911	696,804	55,766	752,570	£ 940
1912	673,729	56,412	730,141	999
1913	639,581	52,845	692,426	927
1924	862,769	455,280	1,318,049	} Nil
1925	766,752	413,955	1,190,707	
1926	720,499	382,819	1,103,318	

Even at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where a fee of 1d. has been charged on five days in the week, 6d. being charged on two days, the effect on attendances has been marked.⁽²⁾ It would seem that fees have affected attendances to an aggregate extent at these two Institutions of three-quarters of a million a year. In the case of the Victoria and Albert Museum, it will

¹ Memorandum submitted to the Commission on behalf of the Victoria and Albert Museum by the Board of Education, p. 335, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² See Appendix II, pp. 329-30, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report. It will be observed that the various factors affecting attendances in the case of Kew are carefully set out by the Director. Nevertheless it would appear from the statistics, that the imposition of fees at Kew has affected attendances to the extent of 300,000 to 400,000 a year.

be observed that the net annual income from fees in the years before the War was less than £1,000. In the case of Kew, the income has been considerably more, namely, some £6,700 per annum, from which sum, however, must be deducted the cost of collection.⁽¹⁾

It will be seen from a glance at Appendices III and V of our Interim Report that, if no fees were charged at any of the National Institutions, the total annual cost of maintenance would exceed the present figure of £1,155,000 by some £11,000. This gain of £11,000 a year is achieved at a great educational loss.

The extent to which the public are ready to respond to instructive exhibition, freely accessible in well-designed and well-lighted galleries, is shown by the experience of the Science Museum. Since the opening of the new wing by Your Majesty in March, 1928, we understand that the attendances at the Science Museum have increased by 200,000 a year, from 700,000 to 900,000. We have reason to believe⁽²⁾ that the greatest portion of this increase is due to the large number of persons from 18 to 20 years of age and upwards who now visit the Museum, and that it is no uncommon thing for small groups of University or College students, or young men in industrial employment, to use the galleries for technical study.

The question at issue is, as stated by Sir Frederic Kenyon, with particular reference to the British Museum, "a very simple one. Is it desired to encourage the use of the Museum or is it not? The nation has a very large capital invested in the Museum, and it is better to look for the return on it from the educational advantages offered to the public, than from a trivial taking of cash at the turnstiles."⁽³⁾

The National Art Collections Fund, which has the privilege of free entrance to the Museums and Galleries and therefore has most to lose by this privilege being swept away, is nevertheless strongly in favour of the abolition of all fees. We are aware that fees have been held to be justifiable at certain Institutions with the object of reserving the galleries on particular days mainly for students. We cannot, however, think this argument a weighty one. Thus, the Royal College of Art is established in close contiguity to the Victoria and Albert Museum with the express object that the students of the various arts at that College may have easy access to all the departments of the Museum. No fees are now charged at the Victoria and Albert Museum: nevertheless there is no complaint that students are in any way inconvenienced by the general public. At the National Gallery the number of *bona fide* students of painting who wish to study

¹ Approximately £172 per annum.

² From the Report of the Advisory Council of the Science Museum to the President of the Board of Education, 1928.

³ Memo. submitted by Sir F. Kenyon on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum, p. 55 Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

is, we believe, small as compared with the number of professional copyists who merely make copies of popular pictures for sale. The reasonable needs of both classes can be met without excluding the public by entrance fees.

Nor is there any consistency in the present arrangements. On the contrary they are in the highest degree anomalous. The British Museum for close on two centuries has been regarded as one of the greatest centres of historical research in all its branches in the world. Fees have never been charged at that Institution. Nor can they be charged without legislation.⁽¹⁾ In short, the present position is that the sculptures of Pheidias at the British Museum or the Raphael cartoons at the Victoria and Albert Museum can be studied by the public and students alike freely on all days of the week, whereas on Thursdays and Fridays or on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, the works of the great masters at the National Gallery and at the Tate respectively can be seen by the public only on condition that they pay 6d.

Again, the position in the matter of fees is anomalous if the position of the National Institutions be compared with that of the Provincial Institutions. "The great majority of Provincial Museums are municipal and in these the preponderance of free admission is overwhelming."⁽²⁾ Indeed in a considerable number of cases the charging of a fee of admission to a Provincial Museum is definitely prohibited by Statute.⁽³⁾

(1) We accordingly conclude that to institute a more general system of admission fees would be unjustifiable from any point of view. And

(2) we recommend that as soon as possible steps should be taken to abolish fees in the case of those Institutions where they are at present charged.⁽⁴⁾

¹ A proposal to charge fees made at the instance of the Geddes Committee (3rd Report of Committee on National Expenditure, 1922, Cmd. 1589, page 89) never reached the Statute Book as, in view of the hostility aroused, the proposed clause in the Bill was withdrawn by the Government on Report.

² Memo. of the Museums Association, p. 138, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

³ i.e. in the case of Museums or Libraries provided under the Public Libraries Act, 1892: Section 11 (3).

⁴ We are aware that, with the exception of Denmark, fees are generally charged on the Continent, with the deplorable result that, as Lord Crawford observes, "foreign visitors are often the only occupants of some of the most famous Picture Galleries in the world" (Anniversary Address to the Society of Antiquaries, *The Antiquaries' Journal*, July, 1927, p. 242). It is notable that the attendances at the Louvre, which is probably the most renowned and comprehensive Museum and Gallery outside this country, amounted in 1927 to less than 950,000 persons (947,289), of whom approximately half were paying visitors. The Louvre is open free only on Sundays. (*Rapport sur l'Administration et la Conservation des Musées Nationaux*, 1928, p. 9). The attendances at the Victoria and Albert Museum alone in the same year exceeded the attendances at the Louvre by over 70,000, while the attendances at the British Museum for that year exceeded those at the Louvre by over 200,000.

Bequests.

28. We have been asked to consider whether the most suitable and scientific arrangement of objects and their allocation to the most appropriate Institutions are hampered in any way by the terms of benefactors' bequests, and, if so, to report whether it would be expedient to take steps with a view to a modification of the terms of such bequests. The question is threefold: (1) Do restrictive bequests hamper scientific arrangement within a particular Institution? (2) Do they result in an inappropriate allocation as between different Institutions? (3) In any event, would steps with a view to a modification of such bequests be expedient?

As regards the first question, it cannot be doubted that there are various bequests which cut across the system of arrangement obtaining in a particular Museum or Gallery, or in a greater or less degree embarrass either administrative or public convenience. Thus there are bequests at a number of the Institutions which were made on the condition either that they should be kept together, or exhibited as a separate collection; that they should not be lent or otherwise disposed of; that (in one instance) they should not be exhibited on Sunday. Among the bequests that have been made and accepted on the precise and definite understanding that they should always be kept together and that they should not be dispersed are such magnificent gifts to the nation as the Salting Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Rothschild Collection, better known as the Waddesdon Bequest, at the British Museum. It will at once be perceived that there is no short answer even to the first question. As the Board of Education observe in their memorandum, "when such a separated bequest is of the extent and magnificence of the Salting Collection, there is much to be said for its segregation; it illustrates the taste of a great collector of the past and it is adequate enough to represent in itself certain distinct phases of culture, for example the Italian Renaissance."⁽¹⁾

The second question bristles with difficult issues. Not many intelligent persons, we apprehend, would suggest that the superb collection of paintings and objects of art of all kinds, accumulated by successive generations of the Marquises of Hertford, now known as the Wallace Collection, would be better or more appropriately dispersed and re-allocated to the National Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, or—in respect of the armour—the Tower of London. We are by no means certain that, if by some magic wand it were possible to re-allocate various parts of various collections in the interest of some apparently scientific arrangement, the remedy might

¹ Page 332, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

not be worse than the disease : in other words, the result might be to emphasise that " scientific taint " which one distinguished witness already finds in, for instance, some of the Picture Galleries.⁽¹⁾

In effect, the somewhat academic question of appropriate allocation cannot be divorced from historic and practical facts. We have already emphasised, in our Interim and in this our Final Report, the outstanding part which private benefactors and individuals have played in the foundation and development of the National Institutions. We think that the advantages to the nation which have resulted from the unstinted devotion of individuals far outweigh such inconveniences as may exist in the case of certain restrictive bequests. We think that any general legislation which might be proposed with the object of modifying the terms of bequests might have a deterrent effect on future benefactors by creating an atmosphere of uncertainty. From the evidence which we have received from the authorities of the National Institutions, it appears that the intending benefactor can usually in his own lifetime be persuaded against making restrictive provisions, which are not only calculated to circumscribe his own reputation, but also the good effects of his benefaction. If the intending benefactor insists on maintaining restrictive conditions, or if the bequest containing restrictive conditions has been made without prior consultation, it is obviously open to the authorities to refuse acceptance unless the circumstances are wholly exceptional. We hope that the authorities will be particularly careful not to receive gifts which are virtually duplicates of objects already in the collections. In this case it should be pointed out to the intending benefactor that far better use may be made of his gift if it is made to some other Institution, whether National or Provincial. In all the circumstances, we are not in favour of any general legislation modifying present practice.

Future Developments.

29. Before concluding this part of our Report we think it desirable to indicate briefly what we conceive to be certain outstanding deficiencies in the National Museums service of the country. We realise that new creations and developments, which in normal times might be expected to fall on the National Exchequer, may at present be beyond its means. On the other hand, the long tradition of private initiative and generosity, and the gratifying results which have followed on the publication of our Interim Report encourage us in the hope that, if the needs are stated, they may eventually be met. Undoubtedly an exceptional opportunity is open to-day, for those who aspire to become

¹ Evidence of Mr. D. S. MacColl, Q. 4641 : " At least one or two rooms should be free from the scientific taint and be hung with mixed masterpieces."

public benefactors, to help in a national way by extending the far-reaching educational benefits which Museums and Galleries are able to bestow.

(1) A Museum of Ethnography.

The absence of any adequate Museum of Ethnography in the capital city of the British Empire is a glaring defect. As the Trustees of the British Museum and the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute have pointed out in their evidence before us, the British Museum contains ethnographical collections which are unrivalled, but their present inadequate setting deprives them of much of their potential value. "In Belgium a large Museum is devoted solely to the products of Belgian Congo. At Bloomsbury there is a small fraction of that space to represent the whole world."⁽¹⁾

The creation of a National Museum of Ethnography might be expected to have great results. It would forward the scientific study of early civilisations; it would promote in the public a more sympathetic understanding of subject races; it would equip those who are about to enter on a career either as administrators or pioneers in the great colonial dependencies with some knowledge of the problems with which they would be faced;⁽²⁾ it would give an impetus to trade, and suggest new ideas both to importers and to exporters.⁽³⁾ On the great part which an adequate Ethnographical Collection could play in satisfying Imperial and economic needs, we would call especial attention to the very interesting evidence which was given before us by Dr. Wellcome.⁽⁴⁾

A Museum of the character required would need large accommodation on a central site. In particular, its lecture halls, laboratories and research collections should be readily accessible to teachers and students in the University of London. An ideal site would therefore be one in the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury. Whether such a National Museum as we contemplate as necessary should be established on part of the limited site

¹ Memo. submitted on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum, p. 58, and the memo. and evidence of the Royal Anthropological Institute, p. 209-218, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report.

² As Mr. Henry S. Wellcome, LL.D., has pointed out in his evidence before us, all civil and military officials, colonizers, planters, missionaries and others who come in contact with native peoples, would find the practical training which such a Museum could give invaluable. "Such training would the better qualify them to carry out their duties with a clear and comprehensive understanding of the native mind." Q. 4552.

³ "An Ethnographical Collection visited by an importer gives him an idea at once of the economic life of the people, and suggests hints as to how their industries can be developed. With regard to the exporter, he can get a very good idea from a collection of what is wanted by the native for the support and development of native industries. This point has been fully recognised by the Dutch who manufacture in Holland large quantities of textiles ornamented with native designs which they export to Java." Evidence of Mr. T. A. Joyce, Q. 3524.

⁴ Q. 4552-4632.

still available to the British Museum, or should find more ample accommodation in the near neighbourhood, will depend largely on the severely practical consideration of finance.

(2) A Folk Museum.

No Folk Museum illustrating the domestic life of our people in the past is at present in existence. Attention has been called to this deficiency by various witnesses, particularly by Dr. R. E. M. Wheeler, Keeper of the London Museum.⁽¹⁾ The finest examples of such Museums are to be found in Scandinavia and in Holland. The best known example is the "Skansen" in Stockholm, where a large number of peasants' houses and other old buildings illustrating the life of the people have been re-erected in a large public park, all fitted with their appropriate furniture and contents. Nothing else can possibly give so true and vivid an impression of the life of the people in bygone generations. The visitor finds himself surrounded by evidences of the home life, the industries, and the art, of different periods and different localities. The Open Air Museum at Stockholm has the further advantage of being situated quite close to the equally famous "Northern Museum," a building which contains enormous collections of objects illustrating the history and development of the Swedish people.

There is, as yet, nothing in the British Isles in any way resembling these Open Air Museums. There should certainly be one each ultimately for England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; of these the most urgent is that relating to England: it would constitute the first attempt at an English Museum. Houses, cottages, work-rooms, &c., and many other illustrations of the life of the people are fast disappearing, and in a very few years it will be impossible to make such an Open Air Museum. It would clearly be of a national character, and should be situated, if possible, in London. Two appropriate sites which seem likely to be available are (1) the Botanic Gardens in Regents Park, which will be vacated by the Royal Botanic Society in 1932, and (2) the 66 acres of ground surrounding Chiswick House which has recently been acquired by the Chiswick and Brentford Urban District Council. If confined to an Open Air Institution there would be no need for any large building on the site, for it would consist entirely of cottages and other small structures illustrating the life of the people, so that even in so central a district as Regents Park, nothing of any magnitude or of an unsightly nature need be introduced; the principal objection, therefore, to such a site could be avoided. It would, of course, be desirable, if possible, to secure some house in the neighbourhood to serve as a museum of the indoor type. Such an outdoor Museum, far from interfering with the amenities

¹ Memo. on Folk Museums, pp. 299-301, Volume of Evidence accompanying Interim Report. See also Sir T. Høhler's letter in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

of any Park or open space in which it is placed, would do a great deal towards making it more attractive; the old cottages and workrooms, open to any visitor, and furnished with all that gives them the appearance of being inhabited and used, would be most interesting and instructive, and would probably attract large numbers of visitors.

(3) An Oriental Museum.

The question of an Oriental Museum has been discussed before us by several witnesses.⁽¹⁾ As Mr. D. S. MacColl has observed, "The British Empire is blinded in the Far East if it does not study the cultures and arts of China and Japan, of Persia, and its own India." The materials for such a Museum both in the British Museum and in the Victoria and Albert Museum are extremely rich.

Failing the establishment of a separate museum of Oriental Antiquities, a project which would involve, not only great cost, but a drastic displacement of collections, we incline to the view that the most efficient arrangement would be the development of a Department of Far Eastern Antiquities at the British Museum. There is ample space for the development of such a Department on the site of the Museum facing on to Montagu Street and Russell Square. We believe that, if such a Department were established, it might attract various important private collections. At the same time it might be a stepping stone to the larger scheme for a Museum of Asiatic Art and Antiquities which might be reached at a future date. If such a development took place, the collections in the Oriental section of the Prints and Drawings Department in the British Museum could be given adequate exhibition space. Moreover, essential contact with the Library and with the Department of Oriental Books and Manuscripts would be maintained. As Mr. Laurence Binyon has pointed out to us:⁽²⁾ "No visitor to the Museum galleries would suspect how rich the material is. Not only are the collections widely scattered, but a great portion of them are hidden away for want of room. The public does not get anything like its proper value from them under the present system of arrangement. I believe everyone would be astonished if these collections could be adequately displayed in a related scheme so as to be intelligible and eloquent to the eye. It would be an event and a revelation. . . . Since the barrier of language is insurmountable,

¹ Notably by the Keepers of the Departments of Ceramics at the British Museum and at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and by Mr. D. S. MacColl, Q. 3250, 3343, 3357, 3363-4, 4638. Professor Rothenstein said: "Seeing that this country has great cultural responsibilities, equally with material ones, in the East, one would like to see an emphatic acknowledgment of the immense contribution made by the Eastern genius to civilization." Q. 3522 (a).

² In the memo. printed with the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

save for the very few, the creative art of these countries is the most direct approach for the western public to the understanding of oriental history, religion and ideals of life. . . . This country has had a longer and closer connexion with the East than any other: it seems fitting that it should take the lead in this matter." The importance of this project, from the standpoint of our national interests in the Far East, is indicated in the memorandum of Mr. W. Perceval Yetts, to which we would call especial attention.⁽¹⁾

(4) A Museum of Casts.

There is at present no adequate Museum of Casts. The question of a Museum of Casts can, however, more appropriately be dealt with in Part II of our Report where we shall review the situation as regards reproductions and casts in the various National Institutions.

(5) Extensions of Museums and Galleries in populous districts.

The Bethnal Green Museum is at present the only National Museum east of St. Pauls. In the course of our enquiry we have been deeply impressed by the great benefits which such an institution can bestow on the crowded districts which it serves. It is an oasis in a desert of dingy streets. It is probable that a large number of the visitors—the attendances are approximately 370,000 per annum—would never visit a National Museum or Art Gallery at all if the Bethnal Green Museum were not situated where it is.⁽²⁾ Moreover, the Bethnal Green Museum affords facilities for art teaching in the elementary and secondary schools of East London. We understand that the Museum Authorities in consultation with the London County Council Education Authorities, have now evolved a scheme of guide lectures which fits in with the ordinary curriculum of the schools visiting the Museum. These arrangements bring "an elder class of scholars right away from the usually dull schoolroom surroundings which are inevitable in East London, to work under their master or mistress for an hour or so in the pleasanter conditions of the Museum galleries."⁽³⁾

The Bethnal Green Museum is in effect a branch of the Victoria and Albert Museum in the East End of London. The establishment in the remoter Metropolitan districts of branch Museums, whether of Art or Science, in connexion with the National Museums and Galleries, would, we believe, be a development carrying with it immense possibilities for good. Thus it might perhaps be possible for the authorities of the Tate Gallery

¹ See Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report.

² Q. 4238.

³ Q. 4240. Evidence of the Keeper, Mr. A. K. Sabin: "The teachers tell me that this change of atmosphere and conditions is a delight and inspiration to their classes; and a number of the scholars go voluntarily in their own time to continue these studies."

to collaborate with the authorities of the Whitechapel Gallery so as to extend the benefits already conferred by that Institution,⁽¹⁾ which is at present only open for special exhibitions. In this connexion, we would call attention to a suggestion made before us by Mr. Laurence Vail Coleman, the Director of the American Association of Museums: "I think that in a large city there are more than ample opportunities for the development of branches which will reach all the ramifications of the community's life. That is surely coming. . . . There are people in New York City who are urging that the Metropolitan Museum have as many as forty or fifty branches. . . . Such Branch Museums could be instruments for utilising the extensive resources of a large Museum. They would reach the people where the people are."⁽²⁾

The Central Library for Students.

30.—(1) The Public Libraries Committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Frederic Kenyon, between 1924 and 1927, carried out an exhaustive survey of the Public Library system in England and Wales. In May, 1927, they presented their report to the President of the Board of Education. This illuminating document, which has already done so much to stimulate the whole library service of the country, dealt at length with the question of the Central Library.⁽³⁾

(2) The recommendations of the Public Libraries Committee involved the reconstitution of the existing Central Library as a special department of the British Museum with a separate stock of books, separate functions and a separate constitution. The Committee contemplated neither a large building nor a large staff, and they recommended "cautious growth and gradual development rather than an immediate commencement on an ambitious scale." They believed that the wisest method of procedure would be for the Government to make an interim grant of £5,000 a year, in order to establish the Library on a sound basis as a national institution. They suggested that a committee should be set up without delay to work out the details of the transfer of the Library to the control of the Trustees of the British Museum.⁽⁴⁾

(3) The Trustees of the British Museum, while confident that the Central Library is capable of becoming an invaluable

¹ Evidence of Mr. Charles Aitken. Q. 1572-73.

² Q. 975-6 and 1063-64.

³ Prior to the enquiry of the Public Libraries Committee, the question of the Central Library had been examined by the Adult Education Committee in 1919, who, in their Third Interim Report (paras. 32-36), recommended that the Central Library for Students should become a central circulating library with co-ordinating functions as regards the library system of the country. The Committee thought that "its income should be derived from subscriptions of local authorities, voluntary organisations and individuals. In addition, the Library should be subsidised from public funds by an annual grant from the Board of Education."

⁴ Public Libraries Committee Report, Cmd. 2868, para. 475-482.

element in a national library service on the lines laid down in the Public Libraries Committee's Report, have not seen their way to assume themselves the direct management of the Central Library as recommended by the Committee. They believe, we understand, that their assistance can be better given in the form of co-operation than in that of direct control. The Trustees contemplate that the Central Library might be constituted under its own Board of Trustees, association with the British Museum being assured by giving to the Trustees of the British Museum the right to nominate two or three of the Trustees of the Central Library.

(4) Meanwhile, Government action on the recommendations of the Public Libraries Committee in relation to the Central Library has been deferred, the question being remitted to us.

(5) The Central Library themselves, in their evidence before us, summarised their functions as: (a) the supply of books especially to the weaker libraries; (b) the interloan of books between libraries; (c) the supply of bibliographical information; and (d) the formation of a union catalogue.⁽¹⁾ In addition, the Central Library proposed to continue the loan of books to groups of adult students. It is also suggested that the Central Library should act for this country as the National Centre for bibliographical information in connexion with the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation.⁽²⁾

(6) The present annual income of the Library is approximately £7,000 a year, of which sum £3,250 represents a grant made by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. It is indeed the Carnegie Trustees who, with characteristic enterprise and generosity, have been mainly instrumental from the beginning in fostering the growth of the Central Library. The contribution of approximately £1,100 a year made by the urban and county libraries is surprisingly small bearing in mind that the expenditure of those libraries is in the region of £1,250,000 a year or more.

(7) By the common consent of representative bodies and persons interested in the library movement of the country, the Central Library for Students has met an important need and is capable of greatly expanding its utility if (a) its constitution, and (b) its financial position can be placed on a more satisfactory basis.

(8) As regards the question of constitution our conclusions are as follows:—

(i) We agree with the view of the Trustees of the British Museum that the direct management of the Central Library by the Trustees would not be desirable. The Trustees "foresee difficulties in assuming themselves the direct management of the Central Library, for which an intimate

¹ Q. 4072.

² 13th Annual Report of the Central Library for Students, 1929, pp. 31-34.

knowledge of the needs and working of the Public Libraries of the country is essential, and in correlating the staff needed for the Central Library with that needed for the British Museum Library; and they fear that the results might be satisfactory to neither party."⁽¹⁾

(ii) Nor do we think it desirable that the Central Library for Students should become an independent State Institution, in other words, a Government Department. It must be remembered that the Public Library system of this country has hitherto developed on the lines of strict autonomy.⁽²⁾ The theory has been and is that the urban and county libraries should rely on rate-given support. This support has been supplemented by private generosity or by the wide-spreading munificence of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. An immense impetus to the development of the Public Library system has recently been given by the removal of the crippling disabilities of the penny rate limitation under the Public Libraries Act, 1919. The benefits flowing from this Act continue to grow with every year that passes. If the Central Library for Students is to perform its functions as regards the urban and county libraries with efficiency, it must never become a universal lending library.⁽³⁾ Otherwise, so far from encouraging the development of the urban and county libraries, it will impede their progress, particularly the progress of the backward libraries which especially stand in need of stimulus. The acid test of the Central Library's future utility will be the extent to which it is able to discriminate between the efficient and non-efficient libraries. We think it undesirable that a Government Department should exercise such powers, if only for the reason that such powers inevitably involve sooner or later discrimination between various forms of literature.

(iii) We think that the Central Library for Students should reconstitute itself under its own Board of Trustees. In the revised constitution arrangements would doubtless be made for close association with the British Museum by the inclusion of one or more of the Trustees of the British Museum on the Board of the Library, together with the Principal Librarian, or the Keeper of Printed Books, or both. We understand that the Trustees of the British

¹ See the letter of the Trustees of the British Museum, quoted in reply to Q. 4087.

² "It is of the essence of the Public Library Service in England and Wales that (apart from the limitations of finance) it has grown up in an atmosphere of freedom." Report of the Public Libraries Committee, para. 120.

³ "What is required from a Central Library," say the Public Libraries Committee, "is not a wholesale distribution of books which can just as well or better be obtained from existing libraries, but a service of a more especial kind. When books are wanted in bulk, it is a sign that it is not the business of the Central Library to supply them." Report of the Committee, para. 479.

Museum favour this course, which would enable them to collaborate with the Central Library.⁽¹⁾

(9) As regards finance, while we do not think that it would be in the best interests of the Central Library itself—or of the Library movement of the country—that it should become a State Institution, we are satisfied that there are certain functions of a national character in respect of which State recognition should be accorded. These functions are the supply of bibliographical information, the development of the system, generally known as the Outlier system, whereby libraries pool their resources in the service of research by a system of loans,⁽²⁾ and the preparation of a union catalogue, through which the resources of these libraries would be made known. These functions are inter-twined, and in performing them the Central Library would, in effect, become a central bureau of library information,⁽³⁾ available for librarians and students, not only in this country but abroad.⁽⁴⁾ We recommend that a grant in aid of this work should be made by the Exchequer to the Central Library for Students, as soon as the Central Library has worked out its new constitution.

(10) It will be clear from what has already been said in the preceding paragraphs that we do not subscribe to the view that the Central Library should look to the Exchequer mainly for its support. We are convinced that the authorities of the Central Library could do a great deal more to encourage further and larger contributions from the network of urban and county libraries who either do already, or may hereafter, derive benefit from the functions which it sets out to perform. We realise that a number of the libraries which most need the help of the Central Library may be least able to afford a substantial subscription. We consider, therefore, that the Central Library authorities should devise a sliding scale of annual contributions, which would be fair to the various libraries in relation to the

¹ Q. 4087.

² The number of outlier libraries working in co-operation with the Central Library is now 74. Of these 48 are special libraries and 26 urban and county libraries. These libraries contain nearly 3,500,000 volumes. "Many of the special libraries and a number of special collections in the urban and county libraries contain books and periodicals which are unobtainable in any other library in England." Annual Report of the Central Library for Students, 1929, pp. 23-29.

³ These functions in Germany are performed by the Enquiry Office attached to the State Library in Berlin. The conditions in Germany differ in important respects from those in this country. An admirable account of the German system will be found in the letter from Dr. Krüss, Director-General of the State Library in Berlin (printed in the Volume of Evidence accompanying this Report).

⁴ We understand that national centres for bibliographical information have already been or are being established in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America. (Annual Report of the Central Library for Students, 1929, p. 31).

population which they serve.⁽¹⁾ On the other hand, the larger and richer libraries will benefit very greatly from the development of the services performed by the Central Library as the central bureau of library information. The representatives of the Central Library, in their evidence before us, recognised the necessity for viewing from a new angle the financial relationship with local libraries⁽²⁾ and for attracting other sources of income.⁽³⁾

(11) In the circumstances we consider that the grant to be made by the Exchequer for the functions described in paragraph (9) should be £3,000 per annum, and with this assistance the Central Library authorities should proceed without delay to work out a thorough reorganisation of the financial fabric of the Institution.

Survey of Present Needs.

31. The immediate need at the present time is for a more active use of the magnificent resources at the disposal of the Nation. The potentialities of artistic and scientific education, partially dormant in our Museums and Galleries, extend to every domain of knowledge, and can be set in motion to influence all classes and sections of the community. But there is to-day inadequate contact, and an absence of dynamic and co-ordinated effort.

The remedies which we have outlined will not be costly. The expenditure of the Exchequer in respect of all forms of education—other than that afforded by the National Museums and Galleries—at present exceeds £50,000,000 a year. An additional sum of £70,000 to £80,000 a year devoted wisely to carrying into effect the various practical suggestions made in this part of our Report would, we believe, achieve far-reaching results.⁽⁴⁾ We recommend that provision should be made accordingly. The dangers of congestion arising from unco-ordinated accumulation must be actively fought. A better studied display of existing possessions would illuminate the path of knowledge for the general visitor, and would facilitate the

¹ The average annual expenditure on books and binding in urban areas of under 50,000 population differs from £412 in the case of areas between 40,000 and 50,000, £236 in the case of areas between 25,000 and 30,000, £96 in the case of areas between 10,000 and 20,000 to £9 in the case of areas under 5,000. (See Table XLVIII, page 264, Public Libraries Committee Report).

² Q. 4093-4.

³ Q. 4086 (concluding para.).

⁴ This sum includes provision for: (i) Assumed interest and redemption on capital outlay, e.g. the new College of Art to make room for the enlarged Circulation Department, Lecture Theatres, and Refreshment Rooms; (ii) Annual current expenditure designed to effect improvements in exhibition, lighting, etc. (iii) Annual current expenditure in respect of increased cost of the Circulation Department and evening openings; (iv) Annual current expenditure in respect of improved methods of contact with the public; (v) Additional expenditure involved by the abolition of fees; (vi) The grant in aid recommended for the Central Library for Students.

work of the student. Improved contact with, and amenities for, the public would unquestionably meet with a ready response.

Efforts directed to these ends would not simply have notable educational results: they might be expected to have an immediate financial effect because generous and public-spirited citizens would, we confidently believe, come to the assistance of the National Institutions even more munificently than they have done hitherto.⁽¹⁾

Again the practical measures suggested for a closer relationship between the National and the Provincial Institutions and between the National Institutions and the Institutions overseas would open a new chapter in the history of Museum and Gallery development. There is a grave need in modern life for the widest possible diffusion of the inspiring influence of the Arts. Students, scholars and individual members of the public are well aware of the deep debt which they owe to particular Institutions. But the greater public is scarcely conscious of the unique value of its inheritance, nor of the extent of the resources at its disposal. We hope that hereafter appreciation of the wonderful opportunities for self-culture open to them will spread to wider sections of the Nation, and that there will be a juster conception of the part which Museums and Galleries can be made to play in the intellectual life of the community.

Our recommendations relating particularly to individual Institutions will be printed as Part II of this Report, and presented at an early date.

All which we humbly submit for your Majesty's gracious consideration.

D'ABERNON.

EVAN CHARTERIS.

T. L. HEATH.

LIONEL EARLE.

R. T. GLAZEBROOK.

GEO. MACDONALD.

COURTAULD THOMSON.

MARTIN CONWAY.

HENRY A. MIERS.

ROBERT WITT.

A. E. COWLEY.

JOHN BERESFORD (*Secretary*),

J. H. PENSON (*Assistant Secretary*).

20th September, 1929.

¹ The benefactions of private citizens have not been confined to the gift of great collections, to the building of new Institutions or additions to existing Institutions: they have extended to permanent endowments (see Appendix III accompanying this Report).

Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations.

1. The endorsement of our interim recommendations in their entirety is encouraging, while Sir Joseph Duveen's example, if followed by other donors, will place this country at the head of the nations of the world in artistic and instructive exhibition. (Para. 1.)

2. The artistic, literary and scientific collections, originally formed for the most part by private initiative, have been maintained out of the public revenues at the lowest possible cost. The attitude of the State has generally been passive. The primary fact that must be taken into account is the profoundly individualistic development of the Institutions. The excellent results of this development are manifest, but there are also serious defects in the present system. (Para. 3.)

3. Co-operation between kindred Institutions is too often absent. There is no united connexion between the National and the Provincial Institutions. There is no single body which has a care for the well-being of the Museums and Galleries as a whole. Though they are essentially educational institutions, development, measured in terms of State support, has for the last twenty-five years advanced hardly at all as compared with other forms of education. Stunted growth is an indication, not only of a lack of appreciation of the purpose of the Institutions, but of a definite defect in the relations between them on the one side and governmental authority on the other. (Para. 4.)

4. The main remedy for present defects will be found in the development of some form of central co-ordination. The continental system is control by a single Department of State. Such a system is alien to the traditions under which our National Institutions have developed. Examined as separate entities, each Institution has abundantly justified its existence and been well served by its governing authority and by its expert advisers. A system of periodical appointment in the case of Trustees should be adopted wherever possible. Generally and without prejudice to certain suggestions reserved for Part II of our Report, we think that the defects in the English system can be remedied without violent organic change. (Para. 5.)

5. We have examined alternative methods of securing the desired end of co-ordination.

We recommend that a Standing Commission in respect of all the Institutions named in our Terms of Reference, and of such others as may hereafter be added, should be appointed forthwith with the following functions :—

(i) To review annually the draft Estimates, with the object on the one hand of discouraging extravagance and on the other of seeing that rival claims have been fairly assessed and a broad view of the general position taken.

(ii) To promote needful co-ordination between the National Institutions themselves and between the National Institutions and the Provincial Institutions.

(iii) To advise generally on questions relevant to the most effective development of the Institutions as a whole.

(iv) In addition to its other functions, it would be the duty of the Standing Commission to stimulate the generosity and direct the efforts of those who aspire to become public benefactors. (Paras. 6-7.)

6. The proposed Body would not have executive power and would not therefore override the existing Trustee and Departmental authorities. It would effect the end in view through its central position and prestige. (Para. 7.)

7. We recommend that the proposed Commission should be a small body selected partly from the governing Trustee and Departmental Authorities and partly from distinguished persons outside those Authorities. The Chairman should have ready access to the Prime Minister and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We suggest that appointments should be for seven years. (Para 8.)

8. As a means to greater unity of effort and the best development of resources we recommend that :—

(i) Each Institution, in co-operation with the proposed Standing Commission, should follow to a greater extent than has hitherto been the case a definite policy with a view to the development of its primary purpose and the avoidance of unnecessary overlapping. In general the aim should be the widest possible radiation of the influence of the arts and sciences through united effort. This end can only be attained by constant collaboration between the authorities of the various Institutions. (Para. 9.)

(ii) Regular meetings should be arranged between the Directors of the National Institutions and between Directors of kindred Institutions and Keepers of kindred Departments therein. Periodical meetings should be held in the different

Institutions in succession, and facilities for intercommunication between junior members of the staff should be afforded. The present opportunities for travel are inadequate and there should be a greater liberality in the matter of travelling allowances both at home and abroad for the staffs of the National Museums and Galleries. The duty of travelling is insufficiently understood. (Para. 10.)

9. The need for co-operative effort is conspicuous in the case of :—

(i) *The National Libraries.*

The essential object is that the authorities of each great Library should so concentrate their energies as to be able to expend their limited resources to the maximum advantage.

We recommend that the responsible heads of the four principal State Libraries in London, viz. of the British Museum, the Science Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Patent Office, should meet together, under the chairmanship of the Principal Librarian of the British Museum, with a view to working out the most efficient method of co-operation.

(ii) *The Ceramic Collections at the British Museum and at the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

There should be a definite scheme of collaboration between the Ceramic Departments of the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, with a view specially (a) to the interchange of loans, (b) to the most effective use of purchasing power, (c) to the promotion of facilities for students, and (d) to adherence to the specialised function of each Collection. A partial solution of the present somewhat anomalous position of the Department of Ceramics at the British Museum will be found if and when either a Museum or a Department of Oriental Antiquities is created.

(iii) *The National Collections of Water-colours.*

The Collections of Water-colours at the British Museum, at the Victoria and Albert Museum and at the Tate Gallery have grown up independently, and owe their present size and magnificence largely to the definite predilections of donors. The day for grandiose amalgamation has gone by, and the practical solution here, as in other cases, is intelligent co-operation and inter-loan between kindred institutions. A draft agreement has already been formulated and should be made effective as soon as possible. The proposed scheme includes a plan for the best utilization of the Turner Bequest. The various Art Collections in London and Edinburgh contain an incomparable wealth of

material, and great benefit would be derived by the intelligent employment of these resources, especially in the case of centenary or special exhibitions. As far as we are aware, the authorities of the principal National Art Collections are not hampered by statute from making loans if those enactments are interpreted in a liberal spirit. Should amending legislation be found necessary, we recommend that it should be introduced with the least possible delay. (Para. 11.)

10. The outstanding need at the present time is the kinetic use of resources, whether artistic, scientific or literary, by co-operative endeavour. The National Institutions should be far less chary than they are of collaborating with one another and of lending to one another on a permanent or semi-permanent basis. (Para. 12.)

11. The need for a closer organic connexion between the National Institutions and the Provincial Museums and Galleries is apparent. The Museum movement cannot fulfil its proper function as an instrument of education in the country till such a connexion has been established. Greater attention should be paid to the needs of children of school age. The duty of remedying the main defects in the case of a rate-aided service lies with the local authorities, but there are certain directions in which much assistance can be given from a central source. (Para. 13.)

12. There is unanimity of view that, if the loan system of the Victoria and Albert Museum were to be extended to the other National Institutions, a powerful impulse would be given to the cause of education generally.

Any indiscriminate lending of the possessions of the National Institutions would plainly be disastrous. Main exhibition series and essential reserves for students must remain untouched. But the National Institutions are in danger of embarrassment from the multitude of their riches, and accumulation can be carried to excess. The time has come when they should seek relief by making their surplus wealth available throughout a wider area. (Para. 14.)

13. We recommend that :—

(i) the Victoria and Albert Circulation Collections should be greatly enlarged in scope and much improved in quality and range by the addition of objects drawn from the other National Institutions;

(ii) the enlarged Circulation Department should continue to form a separate and independent series of objects;

(iii) it should continue its association with the Victoria and Albert Museum so as to secure contact, not only with Provincial Museums and Galleries, but with art schools, secondary schools and training colleges;

(iv) the present regulations confining loans to Museums of Decorative Art should be rescinded, and the circulation of collections of works of fine art greatly extended;

(v) by co-operation between the authorities concerned, the Royal Scottish Museum should supplement the activities of the Victoria and Albert Museum in Scotland. (Para. 15.)

14. Increased space for the enlarged Circulation Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum should be found by the removal of the Royal College of Art to a site contiguous to the Museum. The removal of the Royal College to a new building was proposed by a departmental committee 17 years ago. We recommend that this long delayed scheme should now be carried through speedily. Meanwhile, pending the provision of additional accommodation, the present Department might be developed on its administrative side as a clearing house for correspondence between the Provincial Institutions and the National Institutions in London. (Para. 16.)

15. A proper organic connexion between the National and the Provincial Institutions will not be secured merely by a system of loans from an enlarged central Circulation Department and we consider that a scheme of Affiliation should be developed. Each of the great National Institutions should enter into direct relations with selected Provincial Institutions. It must be prepared to lend freely out of its riches on a semi-permanent basis and be ready to help with advice and to stimulate local interest. There should be mutual interchange of objects between the local Museums and the National Museums. The development of such a scheme of Affiliation, which is essential if the present educational resources of the nation are to be mobilised with efficiency, should be pursued by the proposed Standing Commission. (Para. 17.)

16. We have carefully considered the question of loans overseas, and have reached the conclusion that the time has come when a positive move should be made by this country in the matter of international loans either for exceptional centenary or other especial exhibitions, or for purposes of reciprocity. The desirability of such loans under proper safeguards is especially apparent in the case of the British School of Painting, but any necessary legislation should not be too narrowly drawn so as to confine loans to one category of objects. (Para. 18.)

17. In general the present legal position appears to be that new statutory powers are not required by the National Museums or Galleries, except by the British Museum, including the Natural History Museum, and by the National Gallery, including the Tate Gallery, to enable them to lend overseas.

We recommend that Parliament be asked to pass a short Act which would empower the Trustees of the British Museum, including the Museum of Natural History, and the Trustees of the National Gallery, including the Tate Gallery, to make loans overseas under such precise and proper safeguards as may be determined by the authorities of each institution.

The object to be aimed at is that all the National Museums and Galleries should have the same general powers of loan overseas, though the extent to which these are exercised must necessarily vary with the circumstances of each Institution. The contemplated legislation should be strictly confined to loans and should not deal with exchanges. There is no danger that a brief Act of Parliament, according statutory powers of loan on these lines, would lead to a rash or harmful dispersal of the national treasures. Any suggestion to this effect must fall to the ground in face of the fact that a large number of the Institutions already possess these powers, but, with the exception of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, use them with unnecessary caution. (Para 19.)

18. If the change which we advocate in respect of overseas loans were accomplished, various unfortunate consequences of the present position would be remedied, and great benefits would ensue. (i) Loan exhibitions held from time to time in the capital cities of Europe would stimulate appreciation of British Art, exercise a profound influence on the spirit of creative art and promote international friendship. (ii) Reciprocal advantages would ensue from a system of interchange of loans between the Mother Country and the great Dominions and Colonies. (Para. 21.)

19. There is no short cut to the problem of congestion, but there are certain general factors, the recognition of which would at least make the ultimate solution easier.

(i) A clearer definition of policy, central co-ordination and collaboration between the National Institutions and between the National Institutions and Provincial Institutions will tend to regulate the rate of useful growth.

(ii) The principle of differentiating the needs of the public on the one hand and of the student on the other, which is universally endorsed, should be practised by the authorities far more energetically. (Paras. 22 and 23.)

20. While the remedy for congestion in certain cases may be additional accommodation, great improvements could be effected by a better use of existing space. We consider that :

(i) A reduction in the number of actual exhibits, which would be the consequence of judicious lending, would afford some relief in addition to enhancing the aesthetic value of objects exhibited.

(ii) In a number of Institutions certain galleries should be converted into reserve rooms.

(iii) In others, portions of a gallery should be reserved for study collections.

(iv) Cases better designed to contain large numbers of small objects should be introduced. (Para. 24.)

21. We suggest that Exhibition should be improved by (i) making noteworthy objects more conspicuous; (ii) an increased number of illustrative and explanatory series; (iii) periodical changes in exhibits; (iv) temporary exhibitions; (v) setting aside space for recent acquisitions; (vi) new experiments in artificial lighting; artificial lighting should be introduced forthwith into the National and Tate Galleries; (vii) various methods of re-decoration; (viii) architectural improvements and adaptations; (ix) replacing unworthy picture frames; (x) paying more attention to vistas; (xi) providing clear plans, maps and models; (xii) better labelling. (Para. 25.)

22. The immense resources of the National Institutions should be better utilised by improved methods of contact with the public.

(i) There should be a better organised method of publicity.

(ii) Advertisements might be used much more freely by the Institutions themselves. Financial provision should be made for this purpose.

(iii) The cost of learned publications—an essential service—should be provided for on Parliamentary Votes as generously as circumstances permit, and every effort should be made to stimulate publications having a wide and popular appeal. The arrangements now made by the British Museum for sales through agencies might be developed.

(iv) The second entrance to the British Museum by way of the King Edward Galleries should be opened at the

earliest possible moment, and a stall provided at the entrance. A second book-stall should be opened at the Exhibition Road entrance to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

(v) The Picture Galleries in London should publish short popular guides on the lines of those published by the other Institutions.

(vi) A combined publication containing the principal facts connected with each Institution should be issued.

(vii) There should be more and better photographs.

(viii) The status of the guide lecturers should be reviewed.

(ix) The possible development of a system of guide attendants might be considered.

(x) All the National Museums and Galleries should have lecture theatres.

(xi) Reasonable facilities for rest and refreshment should be provided.

(xii) Evening openings on two days in the week till 10 p.m. should be instituted at the British Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum, the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery and the National Gallery of Scotland. The hour of opening should be extended to 10 p.m. in the case of those Institutions in London which already have evening openings.

(xiii) Evening lectures should be developed, and contact with secondary and public schools extended.

(xiv) In general, improved contact with the public would be greatly promoted if it were made the duty of an individual member of the staff. At the larger London Institutions we recommend that liaison officers should be specially appointed for this purpose. (Para. 26.)

23. The imposition of fees is wholly undesirable and we recommend that, as soon as possible, steps should be taken to abolish fees in the case of those Institutions where they are at present charged. (Para. 27.)

24. The question of restrictive bequests has been carefully explored. On the whole the advantages to the nation which have resulted from the unstinted devotion of individuals far outweigh such inconveniences as may exist in the case of certain restrictive bequests. Under present conditions the intending benefactor

can usually in his own lifetime be persuaded against making restrictive provisions. If he insists, the authorities have the remedy in their own hands. Moreover, they should be particularly careful not to receive gifts which are virtually duplicates, and should indicate to the intending benefactor that better use may be made of his gift in other Institutions.

General legislation modifying present practice might have a deterrent effect on future benefactors by creating an atmosphere of uncertainty, and we do not recommend it. (Para. 28.)

25. There are certain outstanding deficiencies in the National Museum service of the country. The long tradition of private initiative encourages us to hope that, if the needs are stated, they may eventually be met.

(i) The absence of any adequate Museum of Ethnography is a glaring defect. Such a Museum would promote scientific study and a more sympathetic understanding of subject races, would assist administrators and pioneers and give an impetus to trade. An ideal site for a National Museum of Ethnography would be one in the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury.

(ii) No Folk Museum illustrating the domestic life of our people in by-gone generations is in existence. Such open-air Museums are immensely popular on the Continent, and are most instructive. Possible sites are (a), the Botanic Gardens, Regent's Park, (b) 66 acres of ground surrounding Chiswick House.

(iii) The materials for an Oriental Museum are extremely rich. Failing the establishment of such a Museum, a Department of Far Eastern Antiquities at the British Museum should be developed. This country has had a longer and closer connexion with the East than any other. It should take the lead in the matter.

(iv) There is no adequate Museum of Casts.

(v) Extensions of Museums and Galleries in populous districts would be an immense benefit. Branch Museums would be instruments for utilising the extensive resources of a large Museum. They would reach the people where the people are. (Para. 29.)

26. The Central Library for Students has already formed the subject of exhaustive enquiry. By common consent the Central Library has met an important need, and is capable of greatly expanding its utility if its status and financial position could be placed on a more satisfactory basis.

Our conclusions are :—

(i) We agree with the view of the Trustees of the British Museum that direct management of the Central Library by the Trustees would not be desirable.

(ii) Nor do we think it desirable that the Central Library should become an independent Government Department.

(iii) The Central Library should reconstitute itself under its own Board of Trustees. In the revised constitution arrangements should be made for close association with the British Museum.

(iv) While we do not think it would be in the best interests of the Central Library or of the Library movement of the country that it should become a State Institution, we are satisfied that there are certain functions of a national character in respect of which State recognition should be accorded; (a) the supply of bibliographical information; (b) the promotion of the Outlier system of libraries; (c) the preparation of a union catalogue.

We recommend that a grant in aid of this work, which would constitute the Central Library as a Central Bureau of Library Information, should be made by the Exchequer. The grant should be £3,000 per annum.

(v) We are convinced that the authorities of the Central Library could do a great deal more to encourage further and larger contributions from the network of Urban and County Libraries, and from other sources. In future they must view their financial relationship with local libraries from a new angle. (Para. 30.)

27. In a survey of the position of the National Museums and Galleries as a whole, we reach the conclusion that the immediate need is for a more active use of the magnificent resources at the disposal of the nation. The expenditure on all forms of education at present exceeds £50,000,000 a year. An additional sum of £70,000 to £80,000 a year, expended on carrying into effect the various proposals made in this Report would achieve far-reaching results, and we recommend that provision should be made accordingly. There is a grave need in modern life for the widest possible diffusion of the inspiring influence of the arts. We hope that in future there will be a juster conception of the part which museums and galleries can be made to play in the intellectual life of the community. (Para. 31.)

28. Our recommendations relating to Individual Institutions will be presented separately as Part II of our Report at an early date. (Para. 31.)

APPENDIX I.

DRAFT OF AN AGREED ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, THE
VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY, MILLBANK,
WITH A VIEW TO THE AVOIDANCE OF COMPETITION AND OVER-LAPPING IN
THE ACQUISITION OF WATER-COLOURS AND DRAWINGS, 1928.

That in view of the National Gallery, Millbank, resigning its claims for a Print Room System and a Government Grant for purchasing water-colours and drawings, and to exhibit "Black and White" (except drawings and a few examples of engraving in exceptional cases, such as examples of "Book Illustrations of the sixties" in connection with its Pre-Raphaelite Collection, woodcuts by Blake and Turner's *Liber Studiorum*), the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum jointly agree to lend their Print Rooms water-colours and drawings for the purposes of exhibition at Millbank up to the limited requirements of that Gallery.* Such loans to be, if desired by the lending institution, for a fixed period, changed at intervals and kept in the Museum mounts, but to be of first-rate quality, so that the drawings exhibited at Millbank will represent a proportion of the best examples of the artists represented in the united national collections of the three institutions. That occasionally collections of works by one artist or of one period also be lent to Millbank for special exhibitions.

Loans from Millbank to be made if desired to the Victoria and Albert and British Museum for exhibition purposes, provided that in the case of Turner, Blake, the Pre-Raphaelites and Alfred Stevens, where there are special galleries devoted to these artists at Millbank, these galleries are not unduly depleted.

That subject to the approval of the Trustees of the National Gallery in whom the Turner Portfolios are legally vested, when the collection of drawings in the Turner Portfolios has been reconstituted after the Thames flood, the Loan Collection for provincial galleries be placed under the supervision of the circulation department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the "Student material" portion of the Turner drawings amounting approximately to 15,000 sketches, as apart from these drawings suitable and required for loan, exchange and exhibition purposes, be kept on loan in the Print Room of the British Museum.

That the Millbank Board retains its right to purchase occasionally any drawings it considers important out of its private funds, if neither of the other Museums is prepared to purchase such out of their Government Grants, but that as a rule any private funds available at Millbank, be used for the acquisition of Modern Foreign drawings.

The claims for public Grants and the spheres of purchases as between the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum to be settled between the two institutions as suggested by Sir F. Kenyon.

* The number of drawings required for exhibition purposes at Millbank ultimately, when all the galleries on the site are built, apart from the drawings exhibited in the Turner, Blake, Pre-Raphaelite and Stevens galleries, is estimated at 1,500;

500 Earlier British (1700-1850);

500 Contemporary British (1850-1930);

500 Modern Foreign (after 1800);

but the requirements in the near future would not exceed 1,000 and the existing collections at Millbank would provide at least half of these.

Supplementary conditions to the proposed agreement made by the Trustees of the National Gallery.

(1) Explicit statement should be made of the unimpaired right of each Museum concerned to withdraw the material which had been lent under the new arrangement, at any time subject to agreed notice.

(2) That as regards the exhibition of National Gallery drawings and water-colours, either at the two London Museums, or in circulation organised by the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Trustees would reserve their right to decide whether proper protection was given against the action of excessive light.

(3) That as regards the proposed deposit on loan to the British Museum of the "Portfolio" Turner water-colours and drawings, the existing system of numeration, either by National Gallery numbers or the numbers of the Trustees' Inventory, known as the Finberg Inventory of 1909, should be retained.

(4) No sanction could be given which would prejudice the Trustees' powers or diminish their resources in connection with the negotiation of exchange loans with foreign galleries.

APPENDIX II.

Attendances at the National Museums and Galleries in London and Edinburgh and at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for 1903, 1913 and 1928.

	1903	1913	1928
LONDON.			
British Museum—Bloomsbury	920,848	947,090	1,181,617
British Museum—Natural History Depart- ments	486,733	486,320	567,273
Victoria and Albert Museum†§	414,167	692,426	937,577
Science Museum‡§	442,776	345,289	900,053
Bethnal Green Museum§	378,422	419,972	369,923
National Gallery—Trafalgar Sq.*	539,773	617,892	669,408
National Gallery—Millbank (Tate)*	275,526	341,952	349,881
London Museum*|| ... ..	—	325,884 [1914-15]	268,688
Imperial War Museum	—	—	236,411
National Portrait Gallery*	140,687	136,431	176,156
Wallace Collection*††	204,360	160,541	131,634
Geological Museum**	48,970	51,630	20,287
Total... ..	3,852,262	4,525,427	5,808,908
EDINBURGH.			
Royal Scottish Museum	443,871	407,934	505,532
National Gallery (Scotland)*‡‡	68,241	61,898	94,205
National Portrait Gallery (Scotland)§§	18,045	30,151	47,131
National Museum of Antiquities (Scotland)			7,402
National Library (Scotland)	—	—	—
Total	530,157	499,983	654,270
Total (London and Edinburgh)	4,382,419	5,025,410	6,463,178
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew*||| ... ..	—	—	1,127,003
Grand Total... ..			7,590,181

* Admission fees are charged on certain days at these Institutions. In the case of the other Institutions admission is free.

† Admission Fees—charged on 3 days a week—were abolished in 1914.

‡ Admission Fees were abolished in 1909, when the Science Museum became a separate Institution.

§ Evening opening has been curtailed since 1914.

|| Number of paying days a week increased from 1 to 3 in 1921.

†† Attendances fluctuate more than at the other Institutions owing to the different nature of the Collection, e.g., the figure for 1927 was 163,025.

** The decline in attendances is due to the condition of the galleries, which have been closed at intervals in recent years.

‡‡ The figures for 1928 include 11,870 admissions of school children in classes.

§§ 2 paying days a week in 1903—none in 1913 and 1928.

||| Prior to 1916, there was no provision for recording attendances accurately.

APPENDIX III.

Statement of the permanent benefactions, endowments, trust funds or other non-official donations from which the National Museums and Galleries are at present benefiting. (Note : the figures given are in respect of the most recent financial year for which accounts are complete).

Source of Trust or Fund.	Capital or Stock held.	Annual Income.	Purpose to which the income is applied.
British Museum.			
Natural History Museum.			
Act of Incorporation 26 Geo. II c. 22, 1753	£30,000 2½% Consols	£ 750 0 0	The original maintenance fund of the Museum, of which the Parliamentary Grant is in aid.
Bequest of Francis Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater, 1829.	£16,079 2s. 9d. 2½% Consols	401 19 4	£175 salary of Keeper of MSS. as Egerton Librarian (see Civil Estimates IV, 2, p. 34) ; balance to purchase of MSS.
Bequest of Charles Long, Lord Farnborough 1838.	£2,879 10s. 7d. 2½% Consols	71 19 8	Purchase of manuscripts.
Gift of John A. Roebbling, 1917	£1,082 11s. 3d. 4½% Conv. Stock	48 14 3	Capital or interest to purchases or Excavations.
Bequest of Miss Gertrude Bell, 1926	£5,910 18s. 8d. 5% War Loan 1929-47	295 10 10	Excavations in the Near East ; should a School of Archaeology be founded in Iraq the fund goes to that ; otherwise after 21 years it reverts absolutely to the Museum.
Residue of gift of £10,000 by Mr. Walter Morrison, 1912.	£5,296 13s. 2d. 5% War Loan 1929-47.	324 9 2	Excavations in the Near East, primarily at Carchemish.
Bequest of Mr. H. L. Florence, 1916	£1,491 4% Consolidated Stock.	48 14 3	Interest at discretion of Trustees ; at present allotted to purchase of French drawings.
Bequest of Hon. N. E. Rothschild, 1923	£1,082 11s. 3d. 4½% Conv. Stock	491 18 8	Maintenance of the Rothschild collection of Siphonaptera, including salary (£350) of Curator.
	£4,000 Nigeria 4% 1963 Stock.		
	£4,000 India 4½% Stock 1950-5.		
	£3,038 14s. 2d. Southern Rhodesia 5% Inscribed Stock 1934-49.		
Bequest of Dr. G. Swiney	£5,744 0s. 8d. 2½% Consols	143 12 0	Lectures on Geology.
Bequest of Dr. T. Birch, 1766	£565 3s. 9d. 2½% Consols	14 2 8	Addition to salaries of certain Keepers.
Total		£2,591 0 10	

National Gallery.											
Lewis Bequest, 1863...	£10,394 14s. 5d.	2½% Consols	...	£	s.	d.	Improving conditions in the Gallery. Purchase of pictures (*The annual income is given by the Trustees to the National Gallery, Millbank, as an act of grace). Purchase of pictures.		
Clarke Bequest, 1881...	...	...	£23,104 2½% Consols	...	...	577	12	0*
Temple West Bequest, 1907...	...	...	£37,910 2s. 4d.	2½% Consols.	...	3,214	10	10	
Mackerell Bequest, 1908	£35,453 13s. 2d.	3% Transvaal Stock.	...	86	8	0	Purchase of pictures. " " " "		
Florence Bequest, 1916	...	...	£2,888 3% Transvaal Stock...	...	...	496	13	4
Claude Phillips Bequest, 1924, of £15,912... (Note.—£6,756 of the capital has been expended in the purchase of pictures).	...	...	£7,550 4% Funding Loan 1960-90.	...	...	555	9	11
Scott Bequest, 1927	£4,326 4½% Conv. Stock.	12	0	0	" " " " " "		
Publications Fund	...	...	£8,892 15s. 11d.	5% War Stock.	...	398	4	2	
(Proceeds of sales of publications which were financed at the start from the income of the Lewis Fund).	...	...	£520 4½% Rly. Deb. and Gen. Trust Co. Stock. £335 5% and 6% Scot. Aus. Invest. Trust Co. Stock.	...	...	£5,600	15	7
Total	£1,439 3½% Egyptian Pref. Stock.				Maintenance of the economico-botanical collections transferred from the India Museum to Kew in 1879.		
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.	...	...	£500 Deposit Acct.	...	...				
India Office payment of £300 per annum ... (Note.—The India Office, the Government of the Union of South Africa and the West African Government each pay the salary of an assistant employed in the Herbarium).	...	...	£7,964 4s. 0d.	5% War Stock	...				
Bentham Trust, 1884	£	s.	d.	The figure given represents the approximate value of books, publications, and specimens presented or published by the Trust.		
(Note.—The terms of endowment provide for "preparing and publishing Botanical Works, or purchase of Books or Specimens").	...	...	...	...	...	114	14	6
Total ...	...	...	...	...	...	£414	14	6

APPENDIX III—*continued*

Source of Trust or Fund.	Capital or Stock held.	Annual Income.	Purpose to which the income is applied.
Victoria and Albert Museum. £10,866 19s. 2d. received in March, 1908, being residue of the estate of the late Mr. F. R. Bryan. £50,000 received in January, 1911, bequeathed by the late Capt. H. B. Murray.	£10,446 15s. 3d. 3½% India Stock. £1,424 19s. 6d. 3½% Conv. Stock. £25,781 1s. 7d. 4½% L.C.C. Consolidated Stock. £17,500 3% Metropolitan Consolidated Stock. £107 13s. 11d. 5% Victoria Inscribed Stock. £4,999 4% L.M.S.R. Deb. Stock. £3,999 3% L.N.E.R. Deb. Stock. £1,230 12s. 10d. 3½% Conv. Stock...	£ s. d. 415 10 0 2,010 9 2 43 1 4	Purchase of Works of Art. " Purchase of Arms and Armour.
£1,000 (less Legacy Duty received in December, 1927), bequeathed by the late Major V. A. Farquharson. £10,000 (transferred to the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds in June, 1926), bequeathed by the late Mrs. E. Cragg.	£5,000 5% New South Wales Stock. £5,078 3s. 3d. 5% War Stock. ...	503 18 2	Purchase of Works of Art of French or Italian Schools produced during the period 1500–1800 A.D.
Total		£2,972 18 8	
National Galleries of Scotland. <i>Endowment Fund.</i> —A gift of £10,000 by Mr. J. R. Findlay in 1883, towards the establishment of a Portrait Gallery for Scotland was augmented by a Parliamentary Vote of £10,000. Gray Bequest of £2,149 12s. 9d., 1894 ... <i>Simpson Bequest.</i> —(Note.—Part of the original sum of £2,000 was expended, the balance with accumulated income has been invested).	£19,535 0s. 11d. 2½% Consols. £11,000 2½% Annuities. £1,400 5% War Loan. £1,940 18s. 6d. 2½% Consols. £100 5% War Loan. £2,700 5% War Loan ...	£ s. d. 833 7 4 53 10 8 135 0 0	Purchase of portraits. " "

Decoration Fund.—Residue of a sum of £10,000 originally given by Mr. J. R. Findlay for the decoration of the Portrait Gallery. (Note.—There was a balance of £361 of accumulated income at 31/3/28).
General Fund.—Residue (plus accrued interest) of unallocated funds in the hands of the Board of Manufactures when their functions were transferred to the present Board in 1906. (Note.—There was a balance of £939 in this account at 31/3/28).
Laird Bequest of £500, 1911. (Note.—The accumulated income on this account amounted to £399 on 31/3/28).
Cowan Smith Bequest of £52,257 12s. 10d., 1919.

Total

National Library of Scotland.
Grant Fund (Endowment Fund) of £100,000 provided by Sir A. Grant).

Reid Bequest. (Note.—When certain liferents have fallen in the probable residue of the estate will be about £70,000).
Lyle Fund of £500

Tait Fund of £200. (Note.—£68 4s. 8d. of the capital has been expended).
Rosebery Fund

Total

£563 14s. 5d. 2½% Consols. £250 5% War Loan.

£1,150 5% War Loan

£1,029 10s. 0d. 2½% Consols

£111,529 2s. 10d. 2½% Consols

£3,919 19 0

26 11 8 Decoration of the Portrait Gallery.

57 10 0 Has yet to be prescribed by the Secretary of State for Scotland.

25 14 8 Upkeep of Laird Bequest pictures.

2,788 4 8 Purchase of Works of Art.

£ s. d.

5,096 8 4 Collected by the Exchequer and treated as an Appropriation-in-Aid.

2,230 0 0 Maintaining the Lauriston Castle Library bequeathed by Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Reid.

13 16 4 Capital and income for purchase of books on shipping.

5 5 7 Ditto, ditto on engineering.

240 12 2 At disposal of the Manuscript Dept.

£7,586 2 5

APPENDIX III—continued.

Source of Trust or Fund.	Capital or Stock held.	Annual Income.	Purpose to which the income is applied.
National Museum of Antiquities (Scotland).	—	—	Although there are no endowments attached to the Museum. the Society of Antiquaries, through donations and bequests, has accumulated an Excavation Fund which now amounts to over £4,000. The interest of this is devoted to excavation on Scottish sites.
Royal Scottish Museum. Bequest of £2,000 by Major Lindsay Carnegie	£2,490 L.N.E.R. 3% Deb. Stock ...	75 1 10	Arrangement and custody of a collection of coins included with the bequest and the purchase of further coins.

THE GRAND TOTAL OF THE ANNUAL INCOME OF THE ABOVE INSTITUTIONS FROM THESE SOURCES IS £23,160 12s. 10d.

The following Institutions have no benefactions or funds of the kind described in this Appendix:—

Geological Museum.	Public Record Office.	Science Museum.
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ROYAL COMMISSION ON NATIONAL MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

FINAL REPORT, PART I.

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